

AUM

Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, that face of the true Sun, which is now hidden by a vase of golden light ! so that we may see the truth and know our whole duty.

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INDIAN PHILOSOPHERS AND PANDIT LORE

The Philosophical Quarterly is "an organ of the Indian Institute of Philosophy and the Indian Philosophical Congress". Its April number has just been issued and contains five Presidential addresses delivered at the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Dacca last December. In THE ARYAN PATH for February we commented on the address of Prof. A. R. Wadia who presided over the general session. The remaining four addresses were delivered before the Metaphysics, Ethics, Psychology and Philosophy sections of the Congress. These give a fairly good idea of the trend of thought obtaining among Indian scholars on whom western culture has put its intellectual impress. The Congress is their channel of expression, a channel in which the influence of the old-world Pandit is absent. Naturally, there-

fore, the papers before us evince a western rather than a native bent of mind. This is no disparagement to the scholars, whose work is valuable, but the fact must be noted, as having a significance. If the gulf between the Indian *ryot* and city politician is wide, that between the orthodox but learned pandit and the university professor is wider still. To us this is a matter of serious regret; for, if Indian scholars and philosophers continue to allow the *videshi* or alien views and methods to be burnt into their consciousnesses, the ancient culture will suffer grievously, nay more, run the risk of extinction. We recognise most fully the worth of western culture, and are among those who hold that it is *necessary* for Indians to contact it. There are many great and good features of Occidental culture which India must learn to

utilize. Furthermore, in the near future, concepts and ideals of pure and ancient Indian thought will be in demand in the West and India cannot respond without adequate knowledge of the proficiencies and deficiencies of that West.

In this exchange of ideas, and especially in helping the political and social builders of the India of to-morrow, native scholars and philosophers have a very important part to play. We dream of the Indian mystic and metaphysician taking his rightful and honoured place among practical statesmen and administrators—as in days of yore. The country is fully awake to the risks it runs from proselytising missionaries; it has yet to recognize that if not so great a risk, all the same a risk is run in the utter neglect of the Pandit culture by its scholars and philosophers. We are not blind to the fact that the Pandit class is steeped in orthodoxy, is unfamiliar with the evolution of Occidental thought, is saturated with the spirit of sectarianism and superstition. But the Pandit still *represents* something, something that must not be overlooked in the interests of India as of humanity itself. Through his tenacious caste observances, no doubt deserving of censure, he draws us to a calm consideration of the old institution of the Varnashrama Dharma—the division of Society into natural and helpful compartments, as also the division of the life of the indi-

vidual into periods which make for ordered growth through duty to happiness. Through his ceremonial extravagances, no doubt to be condemned, he may have, we assert he has, retained for the world numerous facts of scientific value to the sincere investigator. Through his rigid observance of Sandhya-puja, dawn and twilight worship, perhaps complicated through unnecessary accretions to be deplored, he has a valuable message for the world on the true meaning of prayer—sense-purification, mind-control, soul-realization—the knowledge of which every thoughtful person in the world is seeking. And then he has his explanations about cosmic ultimates, which he may have acquired by rote and therefore imparts without full comprehension, but which are of value to the metaphysician and the philosopher. Similarly, his mere repetition of the constituents of man as an organism may open up for the impartial psychologist a field hitherto not tilled, hardly touched. Indian philosophers and psychologists study and expound old shastraic books by the light of the philology, philosophy and science of the Occident. Thus they miss a very great deal, and succeed in interpreting the old truths in a limited and halting fashion.

These reflections result from a consideration of the addresses presented by our contemporary, with one of which we deal elsewhere in this issue.

THE ENLIGHTENED AND THE ANOINTED

[Alfred W. Martin is a strong pillar of the Ethical Culture Society of New York. He has shown practical good will towards eastern religious creeds by his talks and writings. Here he compares Gotama and Jesus, the similarity of their experience, outlook and message.—EDS.]

When seeking to compare two stars of the first magnitude in the constellation of moral leadership, much depends on the beholding eye and on the level of education and inheritance from which one looks. More depends on the optical apparatus used to aid the eye, and still more on knowledge of the rules that govern measurement of the relative magnitude of the great stars. Some observers come to the task of comparison with their vision blurred by inherited beliefs; others fail to remove the dust of tradition from the lenses of their telescope; and still others fail to brush away the cobwebs of dogma that dangle between the lenses and the firmament. And so it has happened that some persons have reported Jesus infinitely superior to Gotama, and others have held Gotama vastly greater than Jesus. Yet the very first requisite for a just comparison is freedom from partiality, because every disciple is partial to his master and partiality is just as fatal to equity as is prejudice—a truth forcibly brought home to us by the familiar fable of Æsop. A woodsman and a lion were walking through the forest discussing the question, which is the stronger—a man or a lion. Unable to arrive at any mutually satisfactory conclusion, they suddenly came upon a statue representing a man in the

act of throwing down a lion. "There," said the forester, "you see the man is the stronger." "Ah yes," said the lion, "but their positions would have been reversed if a lion had been the sculptor."

It may fairly be doubted whether one identified with Buddhism or with Christianity is qualified for the task of comparing adequately the two Masters. But let not him who is a disciple neither of Jesus nor of Gotama, who confesses complete allegiance to none of the historic religions—let not him imagine that because of his free and non-sectarian position he is on that account especially fitted to take up the task. Even *he* will have to exercise the utmost care and caution, and in all humility of head and heart acknowledge the grave responsibility resting upon him as he faces the task.

Having registered these prefatory thoughts let me as one who owns allegiance to none but that free and ethical religion which bows before *every* teacher, which pays due homage to each according to the amount of truth he has to teach and the inspiration to be derived from the story of his life, let me attempt to set forth the salient points of comparison between Jesus and Gotama to the end that we may be helped thereby to a fuller and deeper under-

standing and appreciation of both.

The Buddha and the Christ. Gotama was called "the Buddha" and Jesus "the Christ". There were many Buddhas in ancient India just as there were many Christs in ancient Palestine. The word "Buddha," like the word "Christ," is not the name of the man but the title of an office. Buddha means *enlightened*, and Christ means *anointed*. Just as an ancient Indian conception of the Buddha, recorded in the sacred *Mantras*, was applied to Gotama, so a conception of the Christ, the Messiah, found in the prophetic books of the Old Testament, was applied to Jesus. He was called the "Christ" because it was believed by certain Judean contemporaries that he was the long expected "Anointed One," one consecrated to, and chosen for, a divine purpose; the *Messiah*, which has for its Greek equivalent, *Christ*. Jesus was God's Messiah, and as such his Son. Similarly Gotama was called the "Buddha" because it was believed he would shed new light on the path of salvation and therefore was worthy to be called "the Enlightened One," one who has reached the Truth. And precisely as the followers of the imprisoned John the Baptist were sent to Jesus to inquire whether he was in truth the expected Messiah, so eminent Brahmans, hearing of Gotama's fame, went to inquire whether he was really the Buddha, "the Enlightened One", of whose advent the scriptures had foretold.

A definite moral aim and a practical programme. Both Gotama and Jesus appeared before their audiences with a definite moral purpose—namely, to win their countrymen to a higher life of unworldliness and of mutual love. "I go to Benares," said the Buddha, "to establish the kingdom of righteousness. I will beat the drum of the deathless (i.e., cessation of rebirth) in the darkness of the world." Said Jesus: "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye and believe in the good news." Both presented their constituencies with a practical programme: that of Jesus the preparing of his people for entrance into the expected kingdom of heaven on earth; that of Gotama the preparing of his people for entrance into that beatific state where there is no more rebirth into a world of suffering, sorrow, disease and death. Again, both felt intense compassion and sympathy for all sufferers, took their stand on the bitter consciousness of the ills to which human flesh is heir and the temptations that beset those who would live in the spirit, and prepared a practical programme of ethical self-discipline which, if adopted and fulfilled, would lead to the final goal of all moral endeavour. This, according to Gotama, was *Nirvana*, permanent release from the curse of reincarnation; according to Jesus the goal was admission into the coming Kingdom of God, the new Commonwealth of Man.

Inner versus outer religion. Both Gotama and Jesus in their preaching protested against the popular reliance of their day on devotion to the externals of religion—ceremonialism, formalism, fasting, etc.,—to secure the highest good. Nor are there any graver warnings to be found in any scriptures against pseudo-religious practices than in the Buddha's *Suttas* and the corresponding passages in the Sermon on the Mount. Both teachers, in their message, threw the whole stress on *inward* conditions. "The Buddha's City of Righteousness," said the venerable Nagasena, "has righteousness for its rampart, the fear of sin for its moat, knowledge for its battlement over the city-gate, and zeal for the watch-tower above it, faith for the pillars at its base, mindfulness for the watchman at the gate, and wisdom for the terrace above."*

What is the use of platted hair, oh fool? What of the raiment of goat's skin? Within thee there is ravaging, but the outside thou makest clean. Taking life and stealing, falsehood and fraud, anger and envy, sensual indulgence—these are things that defile, but not the eating of flesh.†

To his disciples Gotama announced that he had discovered a Middle Way between the two extremes of a life of pleasure and a life of self-mortification. It led to insight and wisdom; its fruit was serenity, knowledge, enlightenment, *Nirvana*. Let people realize the four great truths in which

that Middle Way was summed up: (a) the fact of suffering; (b) the further fact that such suffering has its cause in the craving for personal satisfaction; (c) that it will cease when that craving is stilled; and (d) that there is a noble Eight-Fold Path of self-discipline which issues in that result. Incidentally, it should be remarked that such resemblances in the ethical precepts of Gotama and Jesus as have been already noted, (and they obtain also in the teachings of the other ancient masters) are to be explained in terms of the universality of the moral sentiment.‡

Pessimism. Both Gotama and Jesus were somewhat pessimistic in their world-view, both believing that life here on earth was to be somehow escaped, and hence they made this the central interest of their respective teachings. To Gotama the world was *Maya*, illusion; existence on the earth was to him "*illth*"—Ruskin's counterpart of wealth; but there was a way out and he volunteered to show it to those who would follow him. Far, far back in distant ages where no beginning could be conceived, man somehow started making himself through innumerable lives, whether in heaven, on earth, or in hell. He has been subject to the inviolable law that by every moment's action, in thought, word, or deed, he strengthens or weakens the forces of good or evil within and around him. This was the

* "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. xxxvi, p. 212. ("Questions of King Malinda")

† Dhammapada XXVI, 394. Compare Matthew V. 5, 16; also XXIII, 25.

‡ See my *Comparative Religion and the Religion of the Future*, Chap. I.

famous "Law of the Deed," *Karma*. With the utmost tenacity Gotama held fast to the moral order. It was the foundation of his whole view of life: death could not frustrate its operation.

Consciousness might cease, the eyes might close forever, the body might swiftly decay, but out of the years just ended and the thoughts just stilled came unseen potencies which begot a new person, psychologically if not physically continuous with the deceased, ready to suffer or enjoy what his predecessor had prepared for him by his conduct.*

Would the voyage go on forever? Was there no port in which the storm-tossed might take shelter, no haven in which they might be secure? Yes, beyond the world of the born, the produced, the compounded, full of origins and dissolutions, lay a region invisible and indefinable, where death entered no more—*Nirvana*. The path thither lay through the overcoming of ignorance by knowledge, of passion by self-control, of perversity by steadfastness, of hatred by love. What it would be like no words could tell, but the Buddha came to show how it could be reached.

Jesus shared the Buddha's pessimistic view of the world and also his fundamental optimism. For, Jesus predicted a coming new age of blessedness and in the lifetime of his hearers. In the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere in the gospels we find his prediction of the advent of the new kingdom so soon to appear. Indeed, the language he uses is

too explicit to be misunderstood. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished." Expectation could not be more precise than the manner in which the first three gospels, with varying degrees of details, unite in attributing this advent of Jesus.

Moral progress. As Jesus believed that moral progress consisted not only in ever wider and fuller practice of the precepts transmitted from the seers and prophets of old, but also in the producing of new ethical insights and formulas, so Gotama took a corresponding view with reference to the moral tradition of Hinduism. As Jesus felt that the final authoritative appeal in morals was not to Moses and hence he did not hesitate to advance upon Pentateuchal teaching, so Gotama looked upon the *Vedas* as having no unquestionable authority, but on the contrary he calmly displaced them and the huge pile of ceremonialism built on them by the Brahmans. Infallibility, he felt, was not for fallible man and his safest guide to knowledge of the truth is an independent enlightened mind.

Be ye lamps unto yourselves;
Betake yourselves to no external refuge;
Hold fast to the truth as to a lamp;
Hold fast as a refuge to the truth.
Whosoever shall be a lamp unto themselves,
It is they who shall reach topmost height.†

Personal versus social ethics. The foregoing paragraph leads us to note further, in our series of comparisons, that both Gotama and Jesus were *primarily* teachers

of ethical self-discipline, of personal as distinguished from social morality. The prime concern of each was to secure each individual within the range of his voice salvation. And this to Jesus meant admission into the coming Kingdom of Heaven on earth; to the Buddha, permanent release from reincarnation, *Nirvana*. The one thing needful, according to Jesus, was not to change the social conditions—God would soon attend to that—but to get the greatest possible number of individual souls ready to appear before God at the great assize, and to be deemed worthy to participate in his everlasting Kingdom. As a recent writer in the *Hibbert Journal*, an Episcopal Oxford professor, remarked.

Our Lord carefully refrained from expressing an opinion on political and economic problems which were beyond the scope of his mission. His concern was not with the state but with the individual.

As Jesus fixed his attention on the immediate moral requirements for entrance into that new kingdom so soon to appear, so Gotama gave himself to a similar endeavour for forty-five years, telling his fellow countrymen what they must do to be saved; how, by strict attention to his definite course of ethical self-discipline, the goal could be attained.

Present day moral needs. Finally, we have to note that both Gotama and Jesus, when confronted by disciples with questions regarding the nature and place of

the ultimate goal of human life, turned the inquirers' thought away from the unknown future to the pressing moral needs of the living present. When asked as to the state of being where rebirth had ceased, Gotama answered, "Did I ever promise to tell you?" And forthwith he would explain that such questions had no real moral significance; they did not lead to purification from lusts, tranquillity of heart, real knowledge, higher insight. "Let that which I have not revealed remain unrevealed." Thus did Gotama draw the attention of his hearers away from profitless speculations, and instead concentrated their attention on holiness. Similarly, when the impulsive Peter besought Jesus to tell something regarding the population of the coming kingdom, he replied, "Strive to enter in."* In other words, his contention was, do not be anxiously concerned about the population of heaven, but rather seek so to live as to be worthy of residence there. Thus he behaved towards questions on man's state after death very much as did Gotama, pointing to the path of righteousness here and now, reminding his hearers that this is man's first concern and that in consecrated devotion thereto he can safely trust the future to be both generous and just.

A discussion of the points of *contrast* between Jesus and Gotama must be reserved for another Essay.

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* J. S. Carpenter, *Buddhism and Christianity*.

† *Sutta-Pitaka*. "Sacred Books of the East", Vol. XV, p. 38.

* Luke XIII, 24.

CYCLES IN HISTORY

[William H. Steer, who has been editor of the book edition of Wells' *Outline of History*, author of the British Section of Bliss's *International Cyclopaedia of Social Reform*, editor of the *Homiletic Review*, London correspondent of the *New York Literary Digest* and contributor to the *New Standard Dictionary*, is a Londoner by birth with thirty-five years' experience in Fleet Street. As a book editor during the last twenty years he has dealt with science, biography, politics, history, travel and technical topics. As a keen historical student of many years, he has deduced a fundamental law of history—the Law of Cycles—and writes about it with depth and interest.

While the major premise of this article is correct there are many details which our conscientious author will perhaps find it necessary to abandon with more study and research. The Law of Periodicity is universal and its influence in history is unmistakable. Sincere enquirers will turn to H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, I, 634–647, where the subject is treated in a most illuminating way.—Eds.]

The story of civilisation is no clear cut record of sustained development. There are recognisable recurrences or cycles in history, each cycle showing wax and wane—the rise and fall of this nation or that—a series of fluctuations in culture and philosophy no less than in power and influence. Consequently, within every cycle of history are smaller cycles, each having their little day and each contributing to the course of the major cycle.

This is particularly noticeable in the earliest B. C. centuries, when the process of infiltration was spreading mind and matter through those regions considered to be the cradle of civilisation. Sometimes movement was more rapid than at others, but movement was constant—by migration, by conquest, by culture, by oppression—on the part of oncoming tides of humanity who either submerged those in possession, forcing their own mentality or vitality upon the occupants; or,

by a co-operant pooling of knowledge they became merged—to emerge as one people on a higher plane of power, or of personality; or both.

This is no new discovery. It was connoted in the "Great Year" ideas of the Babylonians, *vide* Berossos, 300 B. C.; later the same enunciation appears among the Etruscans, as referred to by Plutarch, and it also finds expression on the other side of the world in the Mayan record. This "Great Year" was a sign presaging the advent of "a race of men in succession". Not necessarily a halt in progress but heaven's sign that an influx was at hand of men of fresh mental and physical vitality to carry civilisation to higher development. This thought, too, is seen in H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* :—

The universe, as well as each planet, has four ages, like man himself. All have their infancy, youth, maturity and old age.

But does history show that this cyclic course actually takes place?

It does! Nations are not exempt from this formula of life. It is a characteristic of every activity. Prof. Flinders Petrie argues that this rise and fall of the mental temperature over centuries is most clearly shown in sculpture, which, not being susceptible to decay, is a surviving record. That is so, but during the last few decades knowledge of the early world has been greatly extended, whereby more intelligently as well as intelligibly we can also reconstruct the unwritten past from the many other activities and products of human work. Very much still remains to be learned of the culture of the ancients of pre-historic lineage—perhaps more than ever will be discovered—but archaeological research, and the patient reconstruction of philologists of languages of the past, have revealed somewhat of how primitive peoples lived and moved and had their being.

Fortunately for this delving into the past, the widening power of thought sought not only to make record of history, but there was an urge to unburden the mind of the thoughts of the soul. More fortunately still, early civilisations used the medium of stone and clay, skins and papyrus, metals too, each enduring and a proportion of it preserved either in tombs and urns or by Time's earthy deposits protecting the graven recitals from the disintegrating effects of air and weather. So we can trace the story of culture; its flow and ebb, and flow again into fuller tide. As the primitive

but definable culture of the Pre-lithic peoples expanded into a wider consciousness of the values of life they developed from nomadic groups into rational entities. The Sumerians settled between Asia Minor and the Persian Gulf, one stream of the Aryans penetrated into Northern India and another started its westward progress; the Hamites swerved to Egypt and the Iberians toward the Atlantic coast of Europe.

The Sumerian settlement in the fertile vicinity of the Euphrates and Tigris prospered, and eventually expanded into the beginnings of Babylonia. But though the idea of kings and empires began to shape in the minds of the ambitious, the bulk continued in the poise of mind inherited from forefathers long given to contemplation in their peaceful nomadic or agricultural pursuits; meditation upon the sun and moon and stars; the mysterious phenomena of the Universe; thoughts on the impulses of the spirit in mankind, of what did that spirit consist and whence it derived. As time progressed all these quiet speculations were to become tinged by dreams of material power; of conquests; of riches; of the pride of life in buildings and possessions and the pomp of Courts. To foster and protect these, armies came into being. The ego developed and the power of arms led to offence as well as defence. Nations grew, were conquered—might was right.

Recent discoveries at Ur of the Chaldees by Prof. Leonard Wool-

ley and at Kish by Prof. Langdon assign a considerable measure of culture to the Sumerians earlier than 4,000 B. C. Last year, in February 1930, Mr. Woolley reached a pre-flood stratum containing inscribed Sumerian remnants of that period and lower still lies yet to be explored ground expected to carry authentic Sumerian record to even earlier centuries. From then to the collapse of Babylonia in 539 B. C. is an interesting cycle. An influx of Semitic people in the North (Akkad), filtering southward among the Sumerians, using and expanding Sumerian vocabulary and culture and welding on to it their own material ideas, led to the union of North and South in 2750 B. C. when Sargon became first Babylonian king. An Amorite incursion two centuries later led to Babylon growing from a riverside town into a great city and later, 2100, under Hummurabi, developed the First Babylonian Empire, which flourished and was declining to decay when, on the death of Ashurbanifal, an Assyrian King of Babylon, the Chaldeans invaded so effectually in 626 that the brief new splendour of the Second Babylonian Empire resulted. It lasted only for a season, for 539 saw the invasion of Cyrus, the Persian ruler of the Median Empire, and the end of the Babylonian Empire.

That was the warp. What of the weft? The necessary crossing threads to complete the carpet by the interweaving of culture and philosophy with the material

texture? As thought grows, it takes shape in the mind, then struggles to become articulate. Thus one of the earliest vocabularies is the archaic cuneiform of the Sumerian, out of which grew the Phœnician, and so writing began from those first impulses, specimens of which are the inscriptions at Lagash. Sumerian expression also found outlet in various artistic ways. They made graceful pottery, and coloured it; they had filigree ornaments of delicate design, they moulded in copper and carved figures on the surface, they produced life-like animals in stone, one such being unearthed in 1929. Pre-flood relics show a higher grade of artistic conception and execution than fragments of a later period; there was a decline in skill as the people became sophisticated. The hey-day of Babylonian Empire saw art on the grand scale, though recent excavations have brought to light seals and gems and statuettes of 2500 B. C. bearing intaglio carving. These great sculptures depicted events rather than imaginative beauty of line and curve and colour. Hence the great buildings and the walls of Babylon, the hundred gates, each embellished in sculptured bronze—a tinging of Assyrian architecture. With the renewed activity through the Chaldean influence—coeval with Abraham's day—came a period of science; astronomy, geography, and a decimal system of notation; a renewal of intellectual life, which flowed on in a blending of Sumerian and

Aryan culture.

During its long history there have been many marked fluctuations in the intellectual as well as the national life of Egypt. Most of its dynasties experienced this wax and wane within its own period, and the whole of its history, from Menes till it finished as a power, proved the certainty of cyclic truth.

Before Egypt became united it had at least 600 years of history. United Egypt has been known from 4400 B. C. (some chronologists say 5869 B. C.) and there were thirty Dynasties up to the time of Alexander the Great. The Middle Kingdom, roughly 2500 B. C. was eminent in literature and language, and during its course many private libraries existed. The weaker reign of the Shepherd Kings, the Hyksos, followed; then came, *circa* 1700 B. C. the First Empire, with Thebes as the capital, and notable for the endeavour of King Ikhnaten (Amenhotep IV) to set up the worship of one God, the source of light and life. It failed, and with it the First Empire, to be succeeded by the XIXth Dynasty, 1400 B. C., with Rameses II as its greatest ruler, and with signs of decay evident all through the reign of his son Menepthah. There was a rally in the reign of Rameses III, and fluctuations for eight succeeding centuries under Priest-kings and Persian intruders till Alexander the Great smashed the power of the XXX and last purely Egyptian dynasty in 382. Rome and Byzantium then had a hand in its destinies and in modern

times France and England, but as an Empire, Egypt died B. C.

In literature Egypt showed vitality and variety as early as 3000 B. C.; poetry, ethics, medicine, theology, astronomy, fiction. But her monuments are her great legacy, and in them Egypt displays an admirable self-contained example of the cyclic principle, as, too, of course, does her national history.

More than India, or Assyria, or Babylon, Egypt is the land of art and stories in stone, and in the sculptures, the hieroglyphs and pictographs are seen the fluctuations of skill and execution, while in papyri similar phases are traceable. The earliest pottery decoration was to depict basket-work, and it was faithful; but extant specimens show that by the close of the 1st Dynasty a deterioration to careless copying and inferior colouring was manifest. Then came the pictographs and hieroglyphs, well formed by the VIth Dynasty, descending to crudity till the revival in the XIIth Dynasty. Statuary and incised work and bas-relief show the same wax and wane over varying dynasties, till the general revival of the XVIIIth Dynasty, as seen in Temple work, statuary and funerary appointments such as those recently discovered, the Tutankhamen relics. But after that, vitality dropped to the end of the Empire, to be revived later under the Roman occupation.

The military phases of Grecian civilisation being well within the realm of history need only men,

tion to recall. With justice Greece may be considered the home of art and learning; its love of both came on the crest of an Aryan wave, which, by 1000 B. C., had dominated the Ægean civilisation. The "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," says H. G. Wells, "came from the Aryan singers and reciters." He has reluctance to ascribe these to Homer, who, he suggests, "collected and polished" them. Be that as it may, it is certain that an atmosphere of philosophic inquiry suffused Greece; and such as Thales and Heraclitus, some 600 years B. C., were questioning themselves and others as to the world, whence it came and what its destiny might be. Thus philosophy was brought into the open; the soul in man sought to express itself, little knowing that India and China had already traversed the same path. These beginnings in Greece led to their Golden Age, in which poets, historians, dramatists, essayists, orators and satirists flourished, and then retrograded into arid inquiries such as the quest of "the unknown God". When Greece was at the high-tide of culture, Athens was its centre and inspiration, as expressed in art, sculpture, learning, philosophy,—Pericles, Anaxagoras, Sophocles, Euripides; then Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; all never-dying names in the realm of knowledge; men who were "modern-thinkers" in the systematic and unbiassed manner of their enquiry, in the nobility and masterliness of their writing. Such a civilisation could never die,

though decay has been its portion. As a material power it is no more, but its philosophy reminds of Ibanez's *Les Morts Commandent*—"the Dead command". Alexander scattered Greek culture through the nearer East and here the cycle was completed by diffusion.

From the grace and beauty of Greece we turn to the law and order of Rome. The world had grown apace by the time the Romans forged their Empire out of the unrest of the Mediterranean world. It was an Empire of power built upon battle and conquest—doomed from the very first to decline in spirit even though as progenitors of law and liberty they started well, and the Christian nations owe them much, even though the memory of the arena massacres remains a stigma.

Here, as in Greece, the Aryans had percolated, and by 800 B. C. had established themselves among the Iberians, and with the Etruscans, also immigrants of Asiatic origin, showed culture in speech, artistic achievement and the quality of their thought. They gradually spread southward over the Tiber, and settled in the young city of Rome, with Etruscan Veii in the environs. Incidentally the progress of Etruscan culture in arts and crafts is an exceedingly interesting story, but, as that of other civilisations, must be left meantime. About 700 B. C. started a two-centuries' struggle for Roman or Etruscan supremacy. The former, though the weaker, won, and by 450 B. C.

a Roman Republic of the Aryan type was in power, but torn by a long struggle between the patricians and the plebeians for supremacy. By 275 B. C., however, Rome was ruling all Italy and preparing for conquest abroad. The issue of the struggle between Carthage and Rome was a prelude to the victorious march of Roman arms till Rome ruled all that was worth having in Europe, and North Africa. The story is a long one, and well-known; inspiring yet pathetic, for flushed by victories, inflated with power, softened by luxury, honey-combed with treachery and ridden by excess, neither its power nor its materialism nor its adoption of Christianity could save it. The fifth century A. D. saw its end.

Literature in Rome was dim till after the Punic wars, when the knowledge and influence of Greek culture began to make its impress on the Roman mind. Yet they produced greatness. Virgil and Horace will long remain to delight scholars by their exquisite felicity of expression, as Tacitus in moral dignity, and Cicero as a combination of statesman, philosopher, and pastmaster in the power of voice and phrase. We are told that "Rome never added a single principle to the philosophy the Greeks elaborated." The same author continues: "Only the Brahmins of India have equalled the Greeks in intellectual subtlety and acumen," ignoring that each inherited their bias to culture from the original Aryan strain in both.

It is permissible, perhaps, to suggest that the cycle of India is still uncompleted—its destiny is still ahead. It is equally permissible to suggest that this is because its philosophical content still continues. The "spirit" of the Aryan belief was brought to India 1500 years B. C. It is still active, and though doctrines have penetrated from Mohammedan and Christian sources, the true Aryan Indian quietly cherishes the Gautama as embodying a purified Aryan dogma and definitely refuses to be drawn into the turmoil of conquest and material power. The power of the spirit is over all—it suffices. India has had family quarrels within itself; intruders, such as Alexander, tried subjugation—and failed.

It is significant that that other Aryan stream is discernible throughout the history of the whole of modern Europe as giving impulse to the cultivation of the mind wherever the stream flowed. An American writer on European history thus succinctly puts it: "The Aryan in all their branches were the noblest of the primitive races, and have in their later developments produced the highest civilisation ever attained." Is it too much to infer, therefore, that they are the backbone of knowledge, of the arts, of the nobler impulses of life? It is, at the least, an interesting speculation.

Further speculations arise. Empires have decayed through the enervations of power, ambition and luxury; others have lost their spirit through the crushing para-

phernalia of priestly ceremonial. Culture and nobility survive—the things of the spirit are immortal throughout the generations. And cycles are not at an end. Britain will some day complete hers. Norman Angell prophesied a doleful imminence only a short while ago. And from what cause? Will the dross in the melting pot coagulate over the pure metal below? The U. S. A. is in lusty youth—superficial progress is rapid—the

spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers is less perceptible. Maybe, as yeast, this spirit is working under the surface—other generations will see. The words of Abraham Lincoln are worth heeding: "I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to the Light I have."

The world is slow in learning "the extent to which spirit acts, how far it reaches, what it underlies".

WILLIAM H. STEER

"Try, if you can, with the present system of *autochthonous* civilizations, so much in fashion in our day, to explain how nations with no ancestry, no traditions or birthplace in common, could have succeeded in inventing a kind of celestial phantasmagoria, a veritable *imbroglio* of sidereal denominations, without sequence or object, having no figurative relation with the constellations they represent, and still less, *apparently*, with the phases of our terrestrial life they are made to signify," had there not been a *general* intention and a *universal* cause and belief, at the root of all this?

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*Secret Doctrine*, I. 652)

From the remotest periods religious philosophies taught that the whole universe was filled with divine and spiritual beings of divers races. From one of these evolved, in the course of time, ADAM, the primitive man.

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 2)

THE MORAL ASPECT OF REINCARNATION

[J. D. Beresford examines, along a different line, the important doctrine of Reincarnation of which our learned contributor "Cratylus" wrote in the August number and said: "Behind this conception of rebirth the Wisdom of the East is enthroned and Western philosophy can only disregard it to its own detriment."]

We request our readers to peruse the extract from *The Secret Doctrine* II. 302-06 appended to that article. Those further interested will find U. L. T. Pamphlets Nos. 8-9-10 useful; they deal with "Reincarnation in Western Religions," "Reincarnation, Memory, Heredity," and "Reincarnation".—EDS.]

In the course of the past twenty years, I have often faced the conclusion that the theory of reincarnation provides the only reasonable and just explanation of immortality. Like the majority of people, I demand an eschatology of some kind. Without it, life lacks meaning and the incentive to development. The Positivism of Comte, for example, with its inducement of continued betterment for succeeding generations, fails to attract when we reflect that this betterment, however far it can be carried, leads nowhither.

The realisation of this need for some promise of continuity, has led all civilised, (and most uncivilised), peoples throughout known history to picture a heaven of reward for themselves, with, as an almost necessary corollary, a hell of punishment for those who do not agree with them. None of these imagined Paradises, however, can satisfy the logical mind, for it is evident that the short span of a single life cannot be regarded as a sufficient period of probation to deserve an eternity either of bliss or suffering. Moreover, it appears grossly unfair to the unprejudiced enquirer that the can-

didates for salvation should not start with equal chances—some of them, and often those least fitted for the struggle, being handicapped out of all reason by their upbringing and social conditions.

These, and other obvious absurdities have led in the past to various attempts at evading the difficulty, chief of them the convenient postulate that faith should count before works. This was a "short cut" that had many recommendations from the sectarian point of view. It not only solved the problem of the handicaps I referred to, by giving anyone a chance to recant and be saved though he were on his death-bed, but by narrowing the definition of faith, it excluded those who differed on the question of belief, it may be even on an insignificant detail of dogma—thus serving the purpose of attracting converts to this, that or the other community.

The difficulty, however, that perplexes many reasoning people in the principle of reincarnation, arises from the innate desire to retain the memory of events in each earth-life. All those who have failed to reach a certain level of spiritual development, that is to

say the overwhelming majority of mankind, are unable to separate their conception of the Ego or the Individuality from the Personality that they believe, falsely, to represent the true self. By these, the theory of reincarnation is commonly rejected on the ground that it fails to ensure the continuity they desire, since it appears certain to them that even were they able to retain their earth-memories after physical death, they would still inevitably lose them at re-birth. Fundamentally this difficulty arises from a misconception of the function of consciousness, which is commonly associated with physical memory, in the belief that the personality is represented by the sum of those thoughts or acts in past life present in the awareness. Yet a little consideration will show that consciousness has no such relation to memory.

Let me take an imaginary case to illustrate this. Assume, for instance, that a man by some extraordinary failure of the nerves were robbed of the uses of his five senses, that he lost his sense of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, and yet continued to live. Such a man completely cut off as he would be from the physical world, would not thereby suffer any diminution of consciousness. (It is probable, on the contrary that it would be considerably heightened.) And should we go one step further, in imagination, and deprive him of his earthly memories, there is still no reason to suppose that his consciousness would be affected.

This may appear at first sight an extravagant instance, yet every condition of it may be realised in perfect health. All that is needed in matter of outward surroundings is absolute darkness, silence and freedom from interruption. Granted these, the mind may be abstracted from all attention to the functions, audible or inaudible, of the body, the thoughts from the past, and if these conditions of pure meditation can be maintained, only consciousness will remain with all that it will then be found to imply.

Few Europeans, however, are capable of pure meditation, and I use this instance as an argument only and with no intention of advocating the practice. Far more valuable in this connection would be the sincere attempt to rid the mind of initial prejudice, and the making of a preliminary study of what has been written on the subject. For it seems to me that there is no subject more readily pushed aside without any kind of examination, than the one now under consideration.

The reason for this is not far to seek. In what are known as the Christian countries, the terrorisation of the young begins at an early age with the outline of an eschatology that insists upon some form of post-mortem retribution for unbelief. And there can be no sort of doubt that in the majority of cases, the impressionable mind of the child is so far warped by the threat of this teaching, that in later life the adult is incapable of reasoning clearly even about

the probabilities. This is often evidenced in experience by the fact that such a subject as Reincarnation, touching as it does upon the most vital belief a man can hold, is commonly rejected without consideration or any sort of special knowledge. Other topics may be argued with interest, but this one is pushed aside, often with a laugh of the kind that modern psychology associates with what is known as a "fixation," which means in effect that no ordinary communication is possible along this particular channel.

Nevertheless I must assume that no reader of the present article has had his or her mind so far injured by early teaching as to be unable to follow my general reasoning with regard to the ethical implications of the general theory of Reincarnation. And further than that I do not propose to go. For as I have already stated in *THE ARYAN PATH*, I write on these matters as an earnest seeker only, and not with the authority of certain wisdom; and on what follows my appeal is to common-sense rather than to intuition.

Now, granting that we can accept the general theory and principles of reincarnation as taught by Madame Blavatsky, what so strongly appeals to the reason in this teaching is its moral significance. Here can be no question of sudden salvation by the repetition of a formula, nor by lip service to a creed or an ethic however idealistic. Moreover, everyone must shoulder the burden of his or her own responsibility. There can

be no shirking that by dependence on vicarious sacrifice or on the power of a priest to absolve sin. We may be assisted and encouraged in many ways, but ultimately the onus of making progress rests solely with the individual.

This is, no doubt, a doctrine that will be unacceptable to many. The weak prefer the easy way of personal guidance, and the strong—those, for instance, in whom the fleshly appetites are very urgent,—are glad to believe that their indulgence may be expiated by one day's superficial piety in every seven together with a formal acquiescence in the teaching of the Church. But even in my youth, I found it impossible to believe that anyone could achieve even the kind of Heaven that was offered to me, unless he had fitted himself to occupy it. That the Heaven itself was as grotesque a picture of spiritual joy as the Moslem Paradise, is beside the point. What offended my sense of rational consequence was that the kind of life I was expected and taught to follow, could not qualify me either to achieve or, having achieved, to appreciate, this hypothesized abode of bliss. I could see no relation of cause and effect between the two states of being. Indeed, this paradox was evident even to my teachers themselves, who sought to qualify it by telling me that a "great change" came to us at the moment of physical death—an explanation that separated the relation of the two states still further.

Reincarnation completely over-

comes this difficulty. Instead of holding up a rash promise of inconsequent reward, or the threat of undeserved punishment, it teaches that the result of every step gained is added to our development, and that failure to advance, while bringing its inevitable retribution, will not be eternally punished. (The Roman Catholics attempted a feeble version of this in their conception of Purgatory, but that most obviously fails to satisfy many urgent considerations into which I cannot enter in this place). Furthermore, the theory of reincarnation does away with the quite preposterous disparity between the length of human life and the promised eternity that should succeed it. Time, as many thinkers are now coming to regard it, is, I admit, merely a spatial conception; but it is a measure that we are compelled to use, and I am ready to maintain that it is a just one in this connection.

Granting, then, that we can accept the principles of reincarnation as possible and probable, what we have to ask is: How would their universal acceptance as an essential article of faith influence human conduct? And my first answer to this would be: By ruling out the possibility of salvation by any outward profession of religiosity. If reincarnation with its associated and indivisible doctrine of Karma, means anything at all, it means that no progress can be made by perfunctory performance. Each individual is responsible solely to him—or herself. No failing from the personal

standard of ethics nor weakness of endeavour can be absolved by any outside authority. This does not intend that the failing in itself constitutes a punishable sin in the sense used in Christian teaching. The fault is the evidence of the inner failure rather than a positive offence which will ultimately find its separate punishment. And it is the totality of good desires and right thoughts—inevitably finding some expression in actions and speech—which will influence the Karma of the next incarnation.

From this it is evident that to deceive the world, and by a natural consequence of auto-suggestion ultimately the personal self, also, cannot possibly lead to spiritual development. In the world as we know it, are many people who make a profession of religion, people, who, judged by the common ethical standard of their own country, have committed no offence against morality, and have come finally to have a confident belief in their own righteousness. Yet some of them at least, from our present point of view, have done nothing whatever to develop their spiritual knowledge, to make any advance along the path to wisdom. For such failure there is no extrinsic visitation of justice. The fault will find its own consequence, with the natural inevitableness of an universal law. It will neither be judged nor absolved, but presently the true Ego will return to make another trial with little, or it may be, no added strength.

Now it is, I think, impossible to

deny that such a belief, throwing as it does the whole burden of responsibility for virtue upon the individual, has a far higher moral value than a creed that depends for its judgment upon an arbitrary valuation of conduct. Conduct is not, in fact, a reliable criterion. A man may be charitable for purely selfish ends, or may resist temptation in act because he is intimidated by the fear of its consequences, and not because he has any aspirations towards self-discipline. But if we accept the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, there can be no credit for the outward appearance. Jesus said that a man commits adultery when he looks at a woman to lust after her in his heart; and the intention here is apt to the point under consideration, namely that it is the inner desire and not the often accidental performance, which will determine our Karma

in the next incarnation.

Finally, we are faced with the question of incentive in this connection. What, we have to ask, is the moral influence of the promise of reward and threat of punishment held up by most religions? Well, we cannot deny that they may influence conduct, but as we have just seen, conduct is an uncertain criterion of virtue. And, personally, I have been sure for a great many years that neither promise nor threat has had any real effect upon my personal life. The true inner aspiration is not concerned with these things, but solely with what is described in Biblical language as the "hunger and thirst after righteousness". And since the full expression of that longing cannot be attained in an ordinary life-time, reincarnation appears to me to be the only way.

J. D. BERESFORD

Reincarnation. The doctrine of rebirth, believed in by Jesus and the Apostles, as by all men in those days, but denied now by the Christians. All the Egyptian converts to Christianity, Church Fathers and others, believed in this doctrine, as shown by the writings of several. In the still existing symbols, the human-headed bird flying towards a mummy, a body, or the soul uniting itself with its *sahou* (glorified body of the Ego, and also the *Kamalokic shell*) proves this belief. "The song of the Resurrection" chanted by Isis to recall her dead husband to life, might be translated "Song of Rebirth," as Osiris is collective humanity. "Oh! Osiris [here follows the name of the Osirified mummy, or the departed], rise again in holy earth (matter), august mummy in the coffin, under thy corporeal substances," was the funeral prayer of the priest over the deceased. "Resurrection" with the Egyptians never meant the resurrection of the mutilated mummy, but of the *Soul* that informed it, the Ego in a new body. The putting on of flesh periodically by the Soul or the Ego, was a universal belief; nor can anything be more consonant with justice and Karmic law.

Theosophical Glossary, "Reincarnation".

STRAY THOUGHTS ON THE AGE OF SHANKARA

[Theosophical chronology places the era of Shankara much earlier than does that of the Orientalist. At present we will content ourselves by publishing two articles, awaiting response to our invitation for a thorough examination of this problem.—EDS.]

I

[Savaiial I. Pandya is a Sanskritist desirous of presenting to the Western savant the point of view of the Pandit.—EDS.]

I wish to advance some facts about the age of the Śankaracharya, whose Advaitavada or philosophy of Non-dualism has not only maintained its steady popularity in India but has also found great favour with Western scholars. These Occidental savants put forward the date of the old eras of Sanskrit history by centuries and the age of Śankara has not escaped this misfortune.

There are two views regarding the date of Śankara, which are in great vogue at present. Max Müller gave 788 A. D. as the year of the Acharya's birth, while Mr. Telang very strongly pleaded that he must have been born somewhere towards the close of the sixth century. But in spite of their profound scholarship and able argument the conclusions reached by neither of them are final, and the old traditional view which places Śankaracharya some centuries earlier remains yet unshaken.

The traditional views of the life of Śankara are given in *Śankaradigvijaya*—a book written by Madhavacharya who flourished in the times of Hukka and Bukka, the kings of Vijaynagar. This

writer's views must be considered reliable because he was at a later period of his life the chief of the Śringeri Mutt which was founded by Śankaracharya himself; and so Madhava may have had access to some records which are at present lost or unavailable. According to these old traditional views Śankara is said to have flourished nearly 2395 years ago, i.e. the fifth century before Christ. For centuries now the birthday of the Acharya has been celebrated by thousands of Hindus on the fifth day of the bright half of the month of Vaiśakha.

Another point of view may be considered. King Vikramaditya founded an era, known after him, which is almost universally accepted as commencing from 56 B. C. Some scholars are not inclined to agree to this as a correct date and bring it down to 544 A. D., advancing what is known as the Korur theory based on the evidence of Albiruni. "The battle of Korur marks a turning point in Indian history, Vikramaditya having defeated the Mlecchas." Mr. Fergusson held that in order to commemorate this important event an era was invented, and

that its beginning was dated back six hundred years; therefore he supposed the true date of Vikramaditya to be 544 A. D. This theory for a time held sway; for a long time after the researches of scholars had commenced in the field of ancient Indian chronology, no inscription was discovered bearing a date prior to 600 of the Vikrama era. Such an inscription, however, has been lately found, viz., the Mandasor Inscription, dated the year 494 of the Vikrama era. Thus the Korur theory collapses and the time-honoured authority of the traditional account remains unshaken. The date of Vikramaditya has again been established in the first century B. C.

Tradition says that Bhartrihari, the author of the four Satakas, namely Niti, Śringara, Vairagya and Vignana Sataka, was an elder brother and the predecessor of this Vikrama; so when Vikramaditya is placed in the first century B. C., the first half of the first century B. C. or the latter half or the nineties of the second century B. C. should be assigned to Bhartrihari. The ancient date of Bhartrihari is also proved by internal evidence, namely his grammatical inaccuracies in some places; as for instance see—

Kvachit Bhumaśayi Kvachidapi cha
Paryanka shayanah (Niti S'ataka)
S'alyannam Saghritam Payodadhiyutam
Bhunjanti ye manavah (Śringara S'ataka)
(सिद्धान्तकौमुदी 'मुञ्जोऽनवने आत्मनेपद')

Dukhanmokṣye Kadaham Tavacharnarati
Dhyanamargaikapraśnah (Vairagya S'ataka)

(सिद्धान्तकौमुदी 'संयोगे गुरु')

Aho tyarthe pyarthe S'ritisataguru-
bhyamavgate (Vignana S'ataka)

(इत्यत्र संधिरसाधुः 'ओत्' इति तन्निषेधात्)

Grammatical uses in these lines are contrary to the rules laid down by Pāṇini. Now the date of Bhāṣyakar Patanjali a commentator on Pāṇini's work is generally put at 150 B. C.; and it is most probable that during the time of Bhartrihari his *Mahabhaṣya*, i. e. the great commentary, might not have been universally accepted. And the grammarian Hari who later on improved the grammatical rules was yet to be born. By these arguments I aim at proving that Bhartrihari's works were prior to the Christian era. On seeing the faint traces of Buddhist terminology in the Satakas some are led to believe them to be Buddhist. But on a closer study one can clearly see that the Satakas are not the production of a Buddhist intellect; on the other hand, they are the outcome of genius matured by Vedantic study. Hence the preponderance of passages referring to Yoga and Vedanta Philosophies in the Satakas. On this point Mr. Telang declares that after reading and re-reading the Satakas he failed to trace anything in them which can be called peculiarly Buddhist. And it is certainly absurd to expect that Buddhism, with all the wide influence it once commanded in India, would fail to leave its mark, faint though it be, on anything connected with philosophy and morals.

The Bhartrihari who flourished not later than the first century B. C., had not only studied the Vedānta in general but he had studied it particularly as it is taught by Śāṅkaracharya. This can be proved by referring to his writings.

In the 22nd verse in the Vignana Śāṭaka he writes—

Yadadhyastam S'arvam Srijibhujagavad
Bhati Puratas
Mahāmāyodgirnam Gaganapavanādyam
Tanubhritam
Bhavet Tasyā Bhranter Muraripuradhi-
sthana Mudayam
Yato na Syad Bhrantir Niradhikaranā
Kvapi Jagati

If we freely render this verse in English it will run as follows:—

This universe has, as its cause, the elements sky and ether and others. It is plunged in nescience. It appears before our eyes because we imagine it, even as we imagine a rope to be a serpent. It has as its substratum the Lord who is the Reality, because in this world there can be no delusion without some reality underlying it.

This verse, containing as it does, the tenets of Śāṅkara's philosophy could not have been written by a person who flourished before the Acharya. Besides this, the author of Vignana Śāṭaka uses such words as Kutastha, Pratyagātmā, etc. No doubt the word Pratyagātmā is used in the *Kathopanishada* at one place, but it came into vogue only after Śāṅkara used it in his Bhaṣya. This word is not seen in the works written before the times of the Acharya, so it can be inferred that the word was picked up by other commentators after Śāṅkaracharya made it current by aptly using it often in his own Bhaṣya.

But unfortunately there are some who doubt Bhartrihari's authorship of Vignana Śāṭaka. In an article on Śāṅkara we cannot discuss the authorship of Vignana Śāṭaka, but it must suffice merely to state that in this and the other three Śāṭakas there is a similarity of thought, feeling and expression, showing that the author of all the four Śāṭakas is one and the same. In the other Śāṭakas also there are Vedantic terms such as "Karma Nirmulayanti" "Para Brahmani" and "Nirvikalpe Samadhau" etc. And reference is not only to the Vedantic terms but also to the doctrines as well. He (Bhartrihari) speaks of the Vedas with the deepest respect and makes frequent references to the chief Vedantic doctrines. He speaks of being absorbed in Brahma as the highest Bliss. He refers to the method of attaining this blissful position as being the eradication of Karma, and the annihilation of infatuation by means of real knowledge. These are the chief doctrines of Vedantism, and Bhartrihari therefore must be considered to be the follower of the Vedānta system of philosophy. Bhartrihari who flourished in or before the first century B. C. knew full well the philosophy of Śāṅkara; therefore Śāṅkara must have flourished earlier.

Still another point, though these latter arguments are not as conclusive as the former ones. Mr. Tilak believed the Saka Samvat 610 as the year of Śāṅkara's birth; but at the same time he admits that he is one of

the oldest commentators of *Gītā*. The battle of Mahabharata was fought in the beginning of the Kali age; and some scholars are of the opinion that the Kali Age began in 3000 B. C. Some say that the Kaliyuga began in the reign of Parikṣita the grandson of Arjuna, and the battle of Mahabharata was fought in a transition period between the Dvapara Yuga and the Kali

Yuga, some 5350 years ago, while others hold that Arjuna was born after 653 years of the Kali Yuga had elapsed. At any rate the battle of Mahabharata could not have been fought later than 2000 B. C. The very latest date for the age of the *Gītā* must therefore be 1500 B. C.; and one who is styled one of its oldest commentators must have flourished at least before the first century B. C.

SAVAILAL I. PANDYA

II

[Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna Mission is known for his scholarship and zeal for the sacred ideals of Hinduism. We are obliged to him for this short Note on the eve of his departure for America where he will be in charge of one of their centres.—EDS.]

I have read with great interest the erudite article of Mr. Pandya. I know that the views held by him are also shared by others who have investigated into the matter. Mr. Pandya thinks, and rightly so, that Śāṅkara was born some centuries earlier than the dates assigned by Mr. Telang and Professor Max Müller, viz., sixth century and 788 A. D. It may be noted here that Max Müller has simply accepted the views of the late Mr. K. B. Pathaka, the Professor of Sanskrit, the Deccan College, Poona. Mr. Pandya himself does not assign any date. I am afraid his arguments against Telang and Max Müller will not convince the critical students of history who do not attach much value to the *Śāṅkara Digvijayam*. Much of the book appears to be based upon mere tradition. If Madhava, the author of the *Dig-*

vijaya, be the same as Vidya-ranya, whose date has been placed at between the 13th and 14th centuries, A. D., then the book was written many centuries after Śāṅkara. The verses of Bhartrihari, no doubt, contain Advaita ideas, but that does not prove that the author has borrowed them from Śāṅkara.

In our opinion Śāṅkara was born in the 1st Century B. C. I cannot enter into a detailed discussion of the subject at present. Only I give below, in favour of my opinion, the following points for which I am indebted to the Swami Prajnananabha Saraswati who has dealt with the subject extensively in his Bengali book, *The History of the Vedānta Philosophy*.

(1) Śāṅkara flourished before the Paurāṇik age. Unlike Ramanuja and Madhva, he makes very

scanty references to the Puranas in his commentaries. According to Smith and Bhandarkar, the age of the Puranas may be fixed at between the fourth and fifth centuries; but I would like to fix them at an earlier date. The reason cannot be discussed now. The Puranas are the indications of the revival of Hinduism after the sun of Buddhism had crossed its meridian. This revival is due to the resuscitation of the teachings of the Upanishads by Sankara. The Puranas have only recorded in a popular way the abstruse tenets of the Vedanta, systematised by Sankara. The age of this Hindu revival in our opinion may be fixed at between 184 B. C. and 480 A. D. In that case it would not be incorrect to place Sankara's date in the first century B. C.

(2) Sankara is earlier than Kumarila; otherwise he would have mentioned Kumarila and his Philosophy in the commentaries. The age of Kumarila is generally assigned to the end of the seventh century. The story of his defeat at the hands of Sankara, mentioned in the *Digvijaya*, seems to be spurious.

(3) The division of Buddhism into the Hinayana and the Mahayana was made after Sankara as he has not specifically mentioned them in his writings. He has only generally referred to the Buddhist ideas and refuted them. The date of the foundation of the Hinayana and the Mahayana schools may be fixed as the second

century A. D. The Mahayana system seems to be closely allied to the revived Hinduism. "The development of the Mahayana school of Buddhism which became prominent and fashionable from the time of Kaniska in the second century was, in itself, a testimony to the reviving power of Hinduism." (*History of India*, by Smith, p. 286.) For this reason also Sankara seems to me to have been born in the first century B. C.

(4) Sankara does not mention the four schools of Buddhism, viz., Sautrāntika, Yogāchāra, Vaibhāsika, and Mādhyamika. The founders of these schools flourished during the second century and after. Sankara appears to be anterior to them.

(5) Sankara is earlier than the Vedantic philosopher Bhaskara. (8th century A. D.)

(6) Sankara is earlier than Sri Kantha. (4th century A. D.)

(7) Sankara's name has been mentioned in some of the Puranas. Therefore he seems to be earlier than the second century.

(8) Sankara is earlier than Nagarjuna (143 A. D.)

These are some of the reasons which indicate that Sankara was born in the first century before Christ or even a little earlier. Of course these arguments are also not free from criticism. I could have adduced some other reasons, had the time at my disposal permitted it. The date assigned by Max Müller does not appear to be at all correct.

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

EQUALITY

A PROBLEM OF MODERN DEMOCRACY

[John Gould Fletcher, poet and art critic, is a versatile writer known on both sides of the Atlantic. He contributed a very interesting essay in THE ARYAN PATH for September, 1930, on "Blake's Affinities with Oriental Thought".]

In this short article he tries to find a way out of the so-called Democracy into the open air of reality. In spite of the American Declaration of Independence and similar pronouncements men are *not* born equal and never will be. *The Bhagavad-Gita* teaches the Democracy of Spirit: "I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings," says Krishna, the personification of the Omnipresent Spirit; and again "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—Ishwara—who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O Son of Bharata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place."

The Greeks viewed this problem of spiritual democracy in the light of the One in the many and the many in the One. The connecting link between spiritual identity of all and their mental, moral and bodily differences lies in the eastern and Theosophical doctrine of Reincarnation. Mr. Fletcher mentions the Law of Karma—add to it its twin doctrine of many lives on earth, and the problem of Discipline referred to by our author will not remain an unsolved problem. Wrote H. P. Blavatsky (*Lucifer*, May 1889, Vol. IV, p. 188):—

If Theosophy prevailing in the struggle, its all-embracing philosophy strikes deep root into the minds and hearts of men, if its Doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, in other words, of Hope and Responsibility, find a home in the lives of the new generations, then, indeed, will dawn the day of joy and gladness for all who now suffer and are outcast. For real Theosophy is ALTRUISM, and we cannot repeat it too often.

—EDS.]

The French Revolution, as we know, brought to the Occidental World the three ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. And wherever we look upon the world to-day, we see that of these ideals, the first is still paramount in most men's minds. Whether it be in the agitation for political independence that is going on in present-day India, or in the revolt against the old conception of marriage and the family that goes on to-day in present-day America, or in the upheaval of revolutionary communism in Russia, the impulse for

liberty—political, moral, social—still persists. Yet that impulse has very nearly exhausted itself, in the opinion of the few wise men whose minds are capable of judgment on such matters.

Liberty in the final sense means simply freedom to do absolutely as we choose at every moment of our lives. But none of us is absolutely free in this sense, for the simple reason that none of us can live entirely for himself. Even under the worst evils of the present-day competitive system of economics, we have to live in

intimate contact with other folk; and we have responsibilities towards them, as they have towards us. Every form of responsibility implies a limitation of liberty; so that the only complete liberty is that of a desert island, or a hermit's cell. The moment we accept any relationship whatsoever with our fellow-mortals, that moment the rule "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you" comes into force, in its positive or negative form.

Liberty can therefore only fully exist under some scheme of discipline. And that is the purpose of every educational institution, as well as of such political expedients as the Fascist dictatorship in Italy, or the Communist dictatorship in Russia, to supply the *discipline* that unlimited liberty lacks. Whether such discipline could not be better supplied by small groups of "superior men," of what Plato called "Guardians," or the Indians "Mahatmas," must be left an open question. Certainly discipline based on a naked display of military force and political compulsion such as is at present the case in Italy, does not appear to be discipline of a very high type. It is because of the essentially anarchical and undisciplined nature of complete liberty that many Western thinkers have recently tended to stress an opposing idea of functional equality. One has only to read a great deal of psycho-analytic literature to become convinced on this point. Modern sociologists and psychologists—who are coming more and

more to approach each other in aim—are very strong in insisting upon this side of equality. They point out that the continued progress of the world is towards unity, of politics towards a world-state, of modern finance towards internationalism, of modern industry towards a state of standardised uniformity. And to balance this drive, they insist that equality should be accepted as the first desideratum of the human spirit.

In so doing, they simply fail to cure the worst evils of the time. We have already in the West political equality expressed in the ballot-box, but it does not make our lives more significant to have to vote every few years for some opportunist who is to govern us. And international finance may soon give us economic equality for all but the small groups of international business magnates and bankers that secretly control our destiny. But *real equality lies deeper. It lies in a state where each contributes his personal effort to the well-being of all.* The only equality comes out of the status of other people in relation to one's self. And whether such a state is possible under competitive industrialism is doubtful. Because the conception of equality cannot be mechanical, but must be made vital and functional.

We can admit that people are, spiritually, equal in their being. A beggar or a prostitute may fulfil just as important a rôle for the purposes of life itself, as a great ruler, an artist, a soldier, or a philosopher. But the values they

restrict are, in any case, the values of the superior type. Also their functions are different, and the positions they occupy must be different in any well-ordered state. The Indian caste-system was an attempt to create a well-ordered state on the basis of the admitted inequality of value, function and capacity between man and man. And just for that reason it has survived all the attempts of the West to uproot it. It was based on the law of Karma—the karma of the individual and the karma of the whole. We have to go back to the thirteenth century to find anything akin to this institution in Western civilisation—in the feudal system, and the system of ranks in society, as well as in the control of society from a spiritual head. And it may be that the West is still living on the dwindling capital of the thirteenth century. If so, the West is at present rotting spiritually.

Democracy, which is the solution of the problem how to obtain the most equality, is only likely to become demagoguery so long as we persist in the mistaken belief that everybody can share the same function. The function of such a leader as, for example, Mahatma Gandhi is not the same as the function of the ordinary Indian cultivator. It is only in spiritual essence that these two men are akin. And spiritual essence cannot persist under outward confusion of function. The spiritual essence of the West is being steadily destroyed by the presence of blind economic forces, which

impose an equality of function in place of an equality of being. And this is democracy only in theory and plutocratic demagoguery in practice.

The trouble with such men as Mussolini in Italy and Stalin in Russia is that they conceive of equality demagogically—the giving to each member of the community economic well-being as the price of obedience to their commands. But a state based on mere economic well-being is an unstable state. It is the Rome of yesterday, or America of to-day. Spiritually and intellectually it is bankrupt. It cannot produce "superior men" either in the arts or in religious discipline. And with the increasing control of the modern democratic state by industrial and financial aims the possibility that such "superior men" will arise to conduct our affairs, grows more and more remote. *Unless we can count on some form of new spiritual awakening, and some overwhelming of the mechanical and materialistic forces of the present-day by means of a new revolt in the direction of spiritual discipline—which implies aristocracy, leadership, responsibility, and authority—the cause of humanity is as good as lost.* Spiritual discipline implies finding out what the most spiritually-minded men of the past conceived as the goal of man's destiny and attempting to live up to that. Without it we shall all have unlimited liberty without any object to which we can apply it—except the object of sheer naked "getting and spending"

and general wastage of effort.

Whether such an awakening is now in prospect, I do not know. But we will never create it unless we understand that the French Revolution put the accent on the wrong values. What we must first aim at is fraternity, the joyous feeling of unity in our common being and in our aim, not equality through our functioning nor democracy in our political position. Each of us has a destiny, a karma, to fulfil in regard to the world.

It is only through fulfilling that destiny that we can attain to spiritual freedom. And such freedom does not imply equality but inequality. The modern industrial state with its insistence on political and functional equality, becomes a much more potent source of evil—in its senseless prohibitions, its swarming bureaucracies, its loveless "science," its armaments—than the "divine-right" absolutism of older Europe and of the ancient East.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

New thoughts and new interests have created new intellectual needs; hence a new race of authors is springing up. And this new species will gradually and imperceptibly shut out the old one, those fogies of yore who, though they still reign nominally, are allowed to do so rather by force of habit than predilection. It is not he who repeats obstinately and parrot-like the old literary formulæ and holds desperately to publishers' traditions, who will find himself answering to the new needs; not the man who prefers his narrow party discipline to the search for the long-exiled Spirit of man and the now lost TRUTHS; not these, but verily he who, parting company with his beloved "authority," lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man*. It is finally those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests and SELFISHNESS, will have bravely fought for human rights and *man's divine nature*, who will become, if they only win, the teachers of the masses in the coming century, and so their benefactors.

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*Lucifer*, Vol. V, p. 175)

THE GENIUS OF ASOKA AS AN EMPEROR

[Prof. Jagadisan M. Kumarappa, M A., Ph.D., wrote in our June number on the Emperor Akbar. In the following article modern political reformers, especially those of India, are given a message—however indirect and impersonal the method adopted. H. P. Blavatsky commenting upon Asoka said that his lofty views "might be followed with great success in the present age of cruel wars and barbarous vivisection".—EDS]

Since Asoka was, like the Emperor Constantine, the royal patron of his faith, he is commonly spoken of as the "Constantine of Buddhism," but in reality his Asiatic piety made the Buddhist monarch even greater than Constantine. In addition, his Aryan characteristics—brilliance, administrative sagacity and an architectural sense—contributed much toward making Asoka not only unrivalled among the sovereigns of the world but also the most celebrated founder of the first Buddhist empire. In fact, by virtue of these qualities of the head and heart, Asoka created for himself so great a place in the history of Buddhism that his importance is second to none save that of its founder. Even so, his noble and saintly character did not escape the venomous shafts of calumny any more than that of other epoch-makers in history. Some belittled him by painting a dark picture of his early life; others praised him for the virtues which inspired his later life. Some condemned him for his unrestrained kindness to monks; others upheld him for his excessive almsgiving. Some criticised him for destroying the spirit of nationalism in the people; others extolled

him for having given a new emphasis to spiritual values in Indian civilization. Nevertheless, Asoka's life was so novel and his administration so unique that historians have not succeeded in finding one like him—with the possible exception of the Roman saint, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius—in the imposing galaxy of Western monarchs. One may then rightly ask: What permanent contributions did this Buddhist emperor make to human progress which entitle him to the topmost rank among the rulers of the world? Did Asoka make the world really happier and better than he found it to merit such universal reverence?

Though twenty-four centuries, dark and strenuous, have passed since Buddha proclaimed his gospel, yet nearly a third of the human race professes allegiance to Him. Even the proud and scientific West has not been any the less demonstrative in its appreciation of His profound moral teaching. In spreading this faith far and wide, few can be compared with Asoka, the imperial patron of Buddhism. He belonged to the *Sakya-Maurya* dynasty, and reigned from 274 to 237 B. C. He had under his sway

practically all of India with the exception of the southern extremity. And yet his main activity lay not in the field of politics but in the spheres of morality and religion, thus providing an interesting complement to the strictly political system of the *Arthasāstra*. Why did Asoka, powerful as he was as an emperor, interest himself in the spread of *Dharma* (moral duties) rather than in the mere extension of his kingdom? The social and economic changes which, as a matter of course, accompany the expansion of a great empire, the succession of dynastic tragedies, the subjugation of small states, the Greek invasions, and the initiation of numerous religious sects and racial groups had brought about some serious reversions in the social and moral life of the country. The ecstatic, metaphysical and fanciful aspects of religion had taken possession of the people, and religious fanaticism was rampant throughout the land. This situation naturally led the religious-minded emperor to become quite concerned about the material and spiritual uplift of the citizens of his vast empire. In order, therefore, to provide an ethical basis for his political activity, Asoka regarded the spread of *Dharma* as his supreme duty. But how was this betterment to be effected?

Asoka was convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that this task could best be accomplished through religion. But then, of the many religions of India, which

was he to choose as an instrument of uplift? His own religion to begin with was not a religion of creeds and dogmas, rites and sacrifices; his was one of *Karma* (action) and *Dharma* (Law and Duty). He was interested in religion only as a means to the service of humanity. In spite of such attitude towards religion, Asoka openly professed Buddhism in the eighth year of his reign. He was a highly religious Stoic long before he became a follower of Buddha. However, he gave preference to Buddhism—to which he seems to have long been inclined—because Gautama's teaching had more or less taken hold on the peoples of his empire, thus providing the best medium for imparting his laws of morality to the masses. Furthermore, the doctrines of *ahimsā* and *maitrī*, abstinence from taking life and benevolent feeling towards living creatures, seem to have attracted Asoka particularly to this faith, as Buddhism is the most important of those religions which uphold the tenets of non-killing and non-violence.

As a Buddhist, Asoka had profound respect for the sanctity of life, and it is little wonder therefore if the sufferings produced by the bloody conquest of Kalinga caused him "remorse, profound sorrow and regret," and inclined his mind even more to *Dharma*. Indeed, his feeling of contrition was so great that it proved a turning point in his career by awakening in him the spirit of humanitarianism and the unquenchable zeal of the missionary

which later helped him to raise Buddhism to the rank of a world religion. Two and a half years after his conversion to this faith, Asoka, becoming conscious of the possibilities of his position, joined—while still emperor—the Order of monks, and entered upon a course of energetic action to promote the welfare of his people. With such a goal in view, the emperor called together a great council of leading and pious men; among other matters it was decided that religion was to be vigorously propagated by teaching and preaching among the ten great nations from Bactria to Ceylon.

Taking upon himself the duty of preaching *Dharma*, Asoka went on his "tours of morality," mixing with ascetics and mendicants of all sects, visiting the sick and the poor and supporting them with gold, and instructing the people in the laws of morality. Needless to say, his personal interest in the well-being of his subjects made a profound impression. But as it was not possible for him to evangelize the whole empire single-handed, he ordered his officers also to carry on the work he had begun. The highly placed officials, who went on periodical tours, were asked to be not merely officers, but even more teachers of *Dharma*, to the people when they were on circuit. The periodical tour is not an innovation; it is still a feature of Indian administration. However, the distinctiveness in this case lay in adding to the duties of the touring officials that of following the emperor's own example in making

their visitations the occasion for works of charity and the propagation of religious knowledge. This was not known to have been practised by any other king prior to Asoka. Another method adopted by the emperor for the spread of *Dharma* was *Dharma srāvanas* or the proclamations on morality. Through such proclamations the wish and will of the emperor concerning the moral life of the people was made known by these officials to the citizens of their respective districts.

It is interesting to note that the emperor Asoka made use even of amphitheatres to amuse and instruct the masses in morality. By holding edifying entertainments and religious conferences, he tried to induce them to live a life of piety. Further, he created a group of officers known as *Dharma-mahāmātras* or "Superintendents of Morality" to look after the spiritual as well as the temporal good of the people. They were charged with the duty of inculcating piety, redressing wrongs and organizing charities. In this connection it may be mentioned that Asoka laid much stress on the performance of charity by all, big or small, rich or poor. He was particularly anxious that the members of the royal household should set an example in this respect. These Superintendents of Morality were expected moreover to keep peace among the different sects, teach them to study one another's *Dharma*, note the essence of religion and emphasize it for daily conduct. *This method*

of shifting the rituals and theologies of the several religious groups and constructing one's own creed in the light of the knowledge gained would, Asoka believed, achieve the exaltation of one's own sect, and help the different sects to live in harmony by broadening their religious outlook.

Finally, in order to give permanency to his moral instruction and make his descendants follow his footsteps for the promotion of the welfare of the people, excelling him, if possible, in the performance of this noble duty, he adopted the method of inscribing his rules of conduct on rocks and pillars. (This novel method of carving sermons on stones later received a very wide extension, as is still visible in Tibet, China, and Central Asia.) Wise and pious maxims of Dharma, full of valuable and kindly instruction, couched in the simplest and best known tongues of various provinces were inscribed, according to the direction of the emperor, on lats and rocks. Though Asoka's moral exhortations addressed to his people refer to the practice of simple virtues, such as purity, charity, truthfulness, goodness, gentleness, religious tolerance, proper treatment of slaves, obedience to parents, generosity and respect to friends, relatives, ascetics and Brahmins, and abstinence from cruelty to animals, yet it must be noted that his inscriptions show a faith, a high standard of ethics, and philosophy as advanced as the Greek thought of his age. His efforts to

educate and uplift both in and beyond his extensive dominions, were unparalleled and untiring, and they covered a period of almost thirty-seven years, causing his name not only to be universally revered but also to become immortal.

Asoka was a firm believer in allowing each sect freedom to follow its own convictions, but that did not make him an indifferent spectator of rites that were cruel and demoralizing. Though he maintained that the progress of morality by instruction was of greater consequence than that by restriction, yet he did not hesitate to make use of the latter method whenever he found it necessary. He made regulations prohibiting the slaughter of animals; and in place of hunting and such other holiday sports, he substituted edifying performances and inspiring religious meetings. He restricted the diet of the palace to the point of vegetarianism, and put an end to blood sacrifices which—sanctioned by religions—were dear to millions. And that was not all: he also strove to reason men out of their superstitions and “various vulgar and useless ceremonies” perpetrated in the name of religion on occasions of births, marriages and the like. Instead of worship, he preached conduct; instead of rites and ceremonies, he encouraged service of Man. Though he effected modifications wherever it was found good, he did his best to preserve, not destroy, the faith of the millions. To dispel the dark-

ness of ignorance, he provided centres of learning, like the historical institution of Nalanda for the schooling of the young.

In order to increase the physical happiness of his subjects, Asoka dug wells and tanks along the highway, planted shady trees on the roads, established numerous places for the supply of drinking water to men and cattle. He built rest-houses also for the sick and the weary, where food and medicine were freely distributed. Like a true Buddhist, the emperor was active in providing medical aid for men and animals, and in popularising the use of medicinal herbs, roots and useful plants; and this not only in his own dominions but in those of the neighbouring States also. Incidentally it may be mentioned that, while it is commonly supposed that the first hospitals were Christian, Western Europe in fact was at that time in this and many other matters far behind Asia. Rightly does Sir Monier Williams conclude that “the first hospitals for diseased persons of which we have historical record were those of Buddhists where also dumb animals were treated medically and nourished kindly”. For the purpose of seeing that justice was properly administered, he required his high officials to inspect prisons, to give money grants to such as were encumbered with large families and release those who were aged and feeble. In order to ensure impartiality in judicial proceedings, and to give criminals condemned to death an opportunity

to reform themselves, he required the officials to grant them three days' respite. In short, Asoka conscientiously sought to temper justice with mercy. Further, the earlier practice of the king being accessible to the public only at certain hours was modified by Asoka to the extent of being ready to transact business or see officials even during his most private hours.

Asoka, like his Master, was primarily a moral teacher. In order to bring about the spiritual uplift of his subjects, he sought to destroy ignorance and disseminate knowledge. He believed that “all [religions] aim at the subjection of the senses and purity of soul”. “Never think or say that your religion is the best; never denounce the religion of others,” is a praiseworthy commandment of Buddhism. In the most remarkable rock edict XII,—which does him the greatest credit—the emperor entreats that “there be reverence for one's own faith but no reviling of that of others”. “For whosoever praises his own sect or blames other sects—all out of devotion to his own sect, with a view of glorifying his own sect—if he is acting thus he rather injures his own sect very seriously.” Thus he well expressed the views of his Master and inculcated religious tolerance. Buddha demanded the most perfect toleration of all faiths, and *of Buddhism alone can it be truly said that it never in the whole course of its missionary enterprise persecuted the votaries of other faiths.*

Asoka was catholic enough to

study sympathetically the *dharma* of other sects and assimilate its essential features. He greatly encouraged the spread of that general morality on which many religions of India are based, namely, *Jñāna-mārga* or the "Path of Knowledge" prescribed for the people at large. And yet, though one does not find much that is exclusively Buddhist in Asoka's edicts or in the institutions of his empire, Buddhism seems to have been the basis and source of his inspiration. However, the *Dharma* of this Buddhist monarch was really the essence of religion which all sects possess in common. With the help of the 64,000 monks, whom he maintained as teachers of his people, and with the assistance of his numerous officers, Asoka succeeded within a short time in bringing within the reach of the untutored masses of his empire, and making the humblest think and understand, the essence of religion. The manifold measures Asoka adopted for the spiritual weal of his people are much like what Buddha would like to have done had He not renounced the throne and taken to the yellow robe and the beggar's bowl.

The emperor's tireless efforts resulted not only in engendering a powerful moral impulse but also in bringing about certain changes in the material civilization of India. For instance, architecture, which had suffered from the wars of ascendancy of the Aryans, began now to revive and advance rapidly. The idea of giving perma-

nent character to his Dharma-lipis led to the construction of huge monolithic pillars. The ancient caves became shrines adorned with carved pillars, and *Stupās* or chapels arose everywhere. In fact, it is reported that some 84,000 buildings were erected by Asoka for religious purposes in different parts of the empire. The practice of inscribing on big rocks led to the excavation of rock-cut temples with rich friezes and statuary, which, in course of time, developed more and more in artistic form, so much so, that they have now come to be regarded among the wonders of the world. It is worthy of note that there was hardly any stone-building prior to the time of Asoka, and India is indebted to this Buddhist emperor for the use of stone for architectural purposes. In reference to the alphabets used in Asoka's inscriptions, Dr. Taylor says that "they stand unrivalled in the alphabets of the world. . . . Not even modern phonologists have ever proposed an alphabet so ingenious, exact and comprehensive". Further, the actual history of India, as learned from her monuments, begins with Asoka. With the allusions to contemporary rulers of the West in his texts, we come for the first time into the full light of history in India. Even India's influence on the outside world dates from the time when Asoka's Buddhist missionaries were sent to the different parts of the globe.

Being possessed with the vision of promoting the welfare of the peoples of his kingdom and

those of the whole world, Asoka consecrated his life and dedicated the resources of his empire to the realization of that noble end. The stupendous efforts put forth by him for the spread of Dharma in his dominions resulted in knitting the various provinces into a closer union by increasing the frequency of communication between them. This closer union naturally created a universally felt want for a common language, which later led to the acceptance of Pali as the lingua franca of India. Religious scriptures thus came to be written in Pali; even official documents and religious benefactions were recorded in that language. It thus came to pass that Asoka gave to India at that time a common language which contributed much towards bringing about not only the cultural unity of India, but also a national unity by effecting the fusion of the different races of his empire. Since he was converted to a belief in the "conquest by morality," and not "conquest by arms," Asoka produced in the people a love of peace and yearning for spiritual progress. In fact, these traits have become so ingrained in Indian character that even to-day, while there is much general interest in religion and philosophy, there is a decided apathy towards militarism, imperialism and material well-being.

Though India had thus lost her political originality and greatness through Asoka's endeavours to lay a spiritual foundation for his empire, she gained in the spirit of humanitarianism, sympathy for all living creatures and in the appreciation of the unity of all life—these form even to-day the basic principles of Indian culture. Thus the Emperor Asoka made every single year of his thirty-seven years of royal life productive of good works, contributing not only to the spiritual uplift of India but also to the progress of the world. Having spent himself and his all in the care of his subjects and in the interest of humanity, Asoka, the greatest of all great emperors, died destitute of power and possession. Is it then a wonder that H. G. Wells observes that "amidst the tens and thousands of monarchs that crowd the columns of history . . . the name of Asoka shines and shines alone, a star. . . . More living men cherish his memory to-day than have ever heard the name of Constantine or Charlemagne"? Since Asoka's spiritual outlook and ethical mission made him so great as a ruler and so unique as an administrator, has not his life a vital lesson to teach our Princes and politicians who are so keenly interested in India's national reconstruction and the formation of her future administration?

JAGADISAN M. KUMARAPPA

HELVETIUS MEETS AN ADEPT

[Dr. E. J. Holmyard, M.A., M.Sc., D. Litt., records an authentic case of transmutation of lead into gold by Johann Friedrich Helvetius. Theosophists will be particularly interested in this short article because of its being an independent piece of evidence of another Theosophical teaching—the existence of adept-occultists who labour *impersonally* to spread knowledge. Who was the mysterious visitor of the learned but sceptical Helvetius?—Eds.]

Though in many respects the esoteric doctrine of alchemy is more interesting than the physical aspect of the Art, the question whether genuine transmutation of the base metals into gold was ever effected has a perennial fascination. During the last half-century, chemistry has gained a wonderful insight into the minute structure of matter, and the old alchemical problem has consequently assumed a new aspect. Veritable transmutation of the elements is taking place spontaneously in radio-active substances, and artificial transmutation has been effected—though in infinitesimal amount—by bombarding nitrogen atoms with electrically charged particles moving with enormous velocities. It may therefore be stated, without fear of contradiction, that the conversion of lead or mercury into gold is a quite conceivable possibility; but such a statement must immediately be followed by the qualifying remark that, in the present state of our knowledge, the process appears to have little prospect of successful accomplishment. Even in the case of those elements, such as radium, which are already undergoing spontaneous transmutation, all the efforts and resources

of modern science have completely failed to modify the rate of change.

Certain chemical reactions, however, are greatly accelerated by the presence of small quantities of extraneous substances, which are themselves left unchanged after the reaction is over. Thus, the combination of hydrogen and oxygen, which occurs extremely slowly at ordinary temperatures, is at once effected by the introduction of a small piece of spongy platinum or palladium; and the agent is regained unaffected at the end of the action. Substances which produce this kind of effect upon chemical changes are known as catalysts. They play an important part not only in pure chemistry but in industrial chemistry and in the vital processes of plants and animals. A study of alchemical literature may well cause a modern chemist to ask himself whether, by skill or chance, the alchemists perhaps hit upon a "catalyst" capable of bringing about the transmutation of the base metals into gold. Such accounts of the Elixir as we possess certainly describe its action in terms which could almost be applied *in toto* to the action of a catalytic agent.

With these facts in mind, we may turn to one of the most convincing stories of transmutation to be found in the whole annals of alchemy. The principal figure in the episode is Johann Friedrich Schweitzer, usually known under the Latin form of his name, *Helvetius*. He was born at Köthen in 1625 or 1631, and having completed a course of training in medicine he became personal physician to the Prince of Orange at the Hague. There is reason to believe that he was an adversary of the claims of the alchemists, a fact which renders his testimony to the following events all the more noteworthy.

On the twenty-seventh of December, 1666, he tells us, a Dutchman about 43 or 44 years of age called at his house at the Hague and requested an interview. Describing himself as a brass-founder, and a great lover of chemistry, he finally came to the point and asked Helvetius whether he would recognize the philosopher's stone if he saw it. Helvetius cautiously replied that though he had read much about it in Paracelsus, van Helmont, Basil Valentine and other authors, he was by no means confident of his ability to recognize it. Meanwhile, the visitor had taken out of his breast pocket a neat ivory box, from which he extracted three heavy pieces or small lumps of the Stone, each about the size of a walnut, transparent, and of a pale sulphur colour. Helvetius begged in vain for the gift of a tiny portion of the stone; the

adept was inflexible, and took his farewell, promising, however, to return in three weeks' time.

After his mysterious visitor had departed, Helvetius withdrew from beneath his finger-nail a minute fraction of the Stone which he had secretly scraped from the lumps when he had had them in his hand for examination! Hastily fusing some lead in a crucible, he wrapped his particle of the stone in some paper and projected it upon the molten metal. The expected transmutation was, however, a failure, for almost the whole of the lead "flew away," leaving only a "glassy earth". Such a disappointment must have served to convince Helvetius still further of the vanity of alchemy, and it was doubtless with considerable surprise that he found his visitor true to the second appointment.

At this renewed meeting, Helvetius had the grace to admit his theft, and his lack of success in using the stolen stone. The alchemist magnanimously forgave him, and even carried his benevolence so far as to present Helvetius with a further portion of the stone, about half as big as a turnip seed. He explained also the method of projecting it upon the base metal, emphasising the importance of enclosing it first in yellow wax, to preserve it from destruction before it penetrated the lead. Finally, he agreed to come again at nine o'clock in the morning and demonstrate an actual transmutation.

On this occasion, however, he failed to keep his appointment,

and Helvetius never saw him again. After waiting all day, Helvetius began to suspect that the whole affair was a fraud, but late that night his wife came "soliciting and vexing" him to make trial of the tiny particle of the Stone that the adept had given him. Helvetius at first desired her to have patience until the next morning, but soon yielded to her persuasion. With every expectation of proving the adept guilty of falsehood, he and his wife prepared the apparatus. The elixir was wrapped in wax, and six drams of lead were fused in a crucible over the laboratory fire. "I fear, I fear indeed," said Helvetius, "that this man hath deluded me," but nevertheless he dropped the pellet into the molten lead: and within a quarter of an hour "all the mass of lead was totally transmuted into the best and finest gold".

When his first amazement was over, Helvetius experienced a recurrence of scepticism, and ran with the gold, while it was yet hot, to a neighbouring goldsmith, who tested it with the touchstone and declared it to be genuine. The next day all the Hague heard of the marvel, and the Examiner-General of the Dutch Mint, Porelius, asked Helvetius to submit the gold to the thorough examination customary at the Mint. He at once agreed to this suggestion, and the gold was thereupon tested, by both quartation and fusion with antimony, by Brectel, a silver-smith. The result was a little unexpected, for it was found that the gold had increased in weight

by two scruples during the operation; a phenomenon which Helvetius accounts for by assuming that the gold was still "active" and had transmuted into gold two scruples of the silver used in the quartation. The net result of the matter was, he says, that the elixir had converted six drams of lead and two scruples of silver into the purest gold.

In passing judgment upon this story, it is important to observe (a) that Helvetius was a man of indubitable integrity; (b) that he admits to having been sceptical even up to the last moment; (c) that the account he gives us is almost contemporary, having been published at Amsterdam in 1667; (d) that he prepared the crucible and lead himself; (e) that he and his wife were the only people present at the experiment; (f) that there is confirmatory evidence of the gold having been tested by Brectel.

On the last point, we have the testimony of Spinoza, who himself paid a visit to Brectel to gain first-hand assurance, afterwards calling on Helvetius, who showed him the gold and the crucible. Spinoza expresses himself as fully convinced of the genuineness of the transmutation, and, as Figuier says, no one would describe Spinoza as credulous.

If Helvetius is to be regarded as truthful, it is difficult to explain his experience except as an example of actual transmutation. Figuier suggested that the crucible must have been tampered with previously; but such a hypothesis is hardly

convincing, for a well-equipped laboratory must have contained many crucibles, and it would scarcely have been possible to ascertain which of them was likely to be used. Neither does it appear likely that a charlatan would give away six drams of gold without the prospect of a profitable return on his gift, and, as far as we know, the adept was

never heard of again.

Even Kopp, one of the most sceptical historians of alchemy, hesitates to pronounce an unfavourable verdict. Can such a man as Helvetius, he asks, have told an erroneous or untruthful story? He replies to his own question by saying that it would be unreasonable to assume either; and there we must leave it.

ERIC J. HOLMYARD

"The science of religion," wrote Max Müller in 1860, "is only just beginning. . . . During the last fifty years the authentic documents of the most important religions in the world have been recovered in a most unexpected and almost miraculous manner. . . . One of the most surprising facts that have come under our observation, is that students of profound research should not couple the frequent recurrence of these "unexpected and almost miraculous" discoveries of important documents, at the most opportune moments, with a premeditated design. Is it so strange that the custodians of "Pagan" lore, seeing that the proper moment had arrived, should cause the needed document, book, or relic to fall as if by accident in the right man's way?"

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 26)

COINCIDENCES OF THE ELECTRICAL CENTENARY

[Mrs. W. Wilson Leisenring, B. A., is the author of *The Real Earth, Too Small for Life* and other volumes and at one time was Associate Editor of *World Power*. We welcome her as a contributor to our pages.—EDS.]

There is one aspect of what might be termed the 1831 vintage of great minds which has not been specially noted, namely, its distinct and peculiar electrical significance. That the *British Association* should have been founded in the year of Faraday's discovery and that an eminent founder and several presidents* of *The Institution of Electrical Engineers* should have been born in the same year, are striking coincidences; but there are the further facts, that the most famous persons born in 1831 were associated, directly or indirectly, with the theory or the application of electro-magnetism; and that the most distinguished of those known only to scientific connoisseurs were physicists.†

This "configuration" of events is so unusual as to have been noted by astrologers. Their "jargon" elucidates an explanation involving the planets Jupiter—*Pater omnipotens Æther*—and Uranus, both, during 1831, in the so-called "air-sign" Aquarius which is said to be the sign of the "Coming Age" by reason of the sun's procession! However, speculations on zodiacal and planetary radiations must be restrained, although it has been mooted that even "electrons" have minds of their own!

It is a curious fact, also, that the famous, or infamous author of *The Secret Doctrine* was born in 1831, at midnight, July 30-31 (Greek Calendar) for that monumental work adumbrated an electro-magnetic "theory" of cosmical origins, positing the electro-magnetic nature of Light and its existence in supersensible states of space.

The primordial Electric Entity electrifies into life and separates primordial stuff or pregenetic matter into atoms, themselves the source of life and consciousness (S. D. i. 76. *Original Ed.* 1888)

The active Power, the "Perpetual Motion of the great Breath" only awakens Kosmos at the dawn of every new Period, setting it into motion by means of the two contrary Forces, the centripetal and the centrifugal, positive and negative—the two being one *Primordial Force* (ib. i. 282).

Light is Life, Both are electricity, the life-principle, the *anima mundi*, pervading the universe, the electric vivifier of all things. Light is the great Protean Magician (*Isis Unveiled*, i. 258. Pub'd. 1877)

In *Faraday As A Discoverer*, Tyndall noted how Faraday made use of "old reflections of Aristotle" which are "concisely found in some of his works" (p. 123), and it was doubtless Mme. Blavatsky's acquaintance with the arcane doctrines of antiquity that riddled her strange volumes with astonish-

ing and disconcerting anticipations of the future course and discoveries of modern science. This is the view of the author of an elaborate thesis* on Mme. Blavatsky and her writings recently issued in New York under the editorship of the department of philosophy at Columbia University. It would be more interesting to have such a thesis edited by the departments of the physical and chemical science for Mme. Blavatsky had little respect for modern philosophy because, she maintained, it was not based on experimental knowledge; but she declared that her "facts and statements could be left with the greatest security to Science to be justified some day" (S. D. i. 551): "Chemistry and physiology are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths" (ib. 261) which she was attempting to expound, and which only "the exact Science of the future will vindicate fully" (ib. 248). In the department of archæology it is easy to show that Mme. Blavatsky must have known whereof she spoke, for the discoveries since her time of remains of prehistoric civilisations were precisely forecast in one or other of her writings. The subject is remote from the title of these notes, but one instance, found on opening *The Secret Doctrine* (i. xxvi), may be mentioned: the sites of buried cities and the location of underground crypts and libraries, discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in "Innermost Asia," were definitely

indicated and described, even to her "one old Lama"—the "reverend and astute but very pleasant guardian" of the underground library from whom Sir Aurel Stein obtained MSS, etc.

The Physics of The Secret Doctrine was examined in a book of that title by Mr. William Kingsland, M. I. E. E. (author of *Scientific Idealism, Rational Mysticism*, etc.) published in 1910, where he collated numerous statements from Mme. Blavatsky's writings that had been confirmed by physical researches since her death in 1891; but, so far as the present writer is aware, no later editions of this book have appeared. It was certainly puzzling, however, to find in 1910 that Mme. Blavatsky had declared that electricity is atomic, that the constitution of matter is electrical, and that the vortical movements of atoms are due to this polar "force". (S. D. i. 111 to 117) The following is from a volume containing the Transactions of The Blavatsky Lodge (p. 120):

Electricity is on our plane one of the most comprehensive aspects of this [primordial] fire. All contains, and is, electricity, from the nettle which stings to the lightning which kills, from the spark in the pebble to the blood in the body . . . Electricity is the cause of the molecular motion in the physical universe and hence also here, on earth. It is one of the "principles" of matter, for generated as it is in every disturbance of equilibrium, it becomes, so to say, the Kamic element of the object in which the disturbance takes place.

The "atom," however, is con-

* "Theosophy: A Modern Revival of Ancient Wisdom" By Alvin Boyd Kuhn. *Studies In Religion and Culture* III.

* Sir Francis Bolton; David E. Hughes, who invented the microphone.

† Clerk Maxwell, P. G. Tait, etc.

ceived somewhat as in physics to-day: "it is *an entified abstraction*—at any rate for physical Science—and has nought to do with physics, strictly speaking, as it can never be brought to the test of retort or balance" (S.D. i. 513).

These statements do seem to have been founded on something more than guess-work; but the following prediction is still more definite:—"Between this time [1887] and 1897 there will be a large rent made in the veil of Nature and materialistic science will receive a death-blow" (*ib.* 612). It is unlikely that Mme. Blavatsky saw Röntgen in his laboratory in 1895 photographed in what she once described as the "photograph album of Akasha," yet her reiterated statement was that a characteristic of matter next to be discovered by science is its *permeability* (*ib.* 258). Space, she said, is *within* physical matter, as well as without (*ib.* 620, 671-2), and there are interpenetrating *spaces within space*—within the atom—"states of empty space," as Professor Einstein expresses it. Mr. Kingsland noted in 1910 that this concept was only then dawning in physical science: and even now it is incomprehensible to most laymen.

That the universe is self-generated, self-created, and self-existent, and that "the 'Parent Space' is the eternal, ever-present cause of all" (*ib.* i. 35), seems to be the fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, and is in line with Prof. Einstein's conclusion that

space will have to be regarded as primary and matter derived from it as a secondary product. Apparently the question as to the existence of the aether did not arise: space is aether, and aether, space. The scientific philosophers of every ancient civilization had, Mme. Blavatsky said, their own word for "space," the connotation of the Chaldean *Ab Soo* being, "the source of all knowledge". There are, however, differentiations of the primordial, interstellar Space-Substance: the "upper aether" of the Greeks being supersensible "Akasha," and its lower, compound effects, the physical aether condensed around the planets. Space is a living Being, in essence the incomprehensible Deity: its periodical activity is the pulsation of a *vital* Electricity ("Fohat") condensed and made visible in the sun,* and functioning in still more differentiated states as the preserving principle throughout nature (S.D. i. 111-112). It is the regular contraction and expansion of this "noumenon of matter" that causes the universal vibration of atoms (*ib.* 84).

The significance of the present interest in the nature of the universe and of the "physical world" is its association with spatial conceptions, and it is *apropos* to add here that in *The Secret Doctrine*, space is related not only causally but identically with the universe. There is, it goes without saying, no mathematical unified field-theory in these volumes, but whether the universe be finite or

infinite seems not to be a problem. The crux of the matter is with regard to what we mean by "expansion":

The expansion "from within without" of the Mother ("The Universal Matrix," "Waters of Space" etc.) does not allude to an expansion from a small centre or focus, but, without reference to size or limitation or area, means the development of limitless subjectivity into as limitless objectivity . . . It implies that this expansion, not being an increase in size—for infinite extension admits of no enlargement—was a change of condition. S. D. i. 62,63).

There is, as Prof. Einstein remarked in his second Rhodes Lecture (May 16, 1931), "the difficulty of knowing from what the world began expanding, as it could hardly have been *ganz klein!*"

Although ultra-violet rays were undiscovered and unnamed in Mme. Blavatsky's life-time, she used a Sanskrit term that denotes the rays absorbed in the process now known as photosynthesis—the "Sushumna sun-ray" which "the animal tissues absorb according to their more or less morbid or healthy state . . . and, from the moment of the birth of the Entity, they are regulated, strengthened and *fed* by it." (*ib.* 537) The following passage, however, might have been penned, if not read, long ago, by Sir Jagadis C. Bose who respects the knowledge of his ancestors:—

The idea of universal life is one of those ancient conceptions which are returning to the human mind in this century, as a consequence of its liberation from anthropomorphic theology . . . The idea of "crystalline life," . . . would

have been scouted half a century ago. Botanists are now searching for the nerves of plants; not that they suppose that plants can feel or think as animals do, but because they believe that some structure, bearing the same relation functionally to plant life that nerves bear to animal life, is necessary to explain vegetable growth and nutrition. (*ib.* 49.)

What an odd twist of fate that the author of works presumably based on scientific principles should have been appropriated by sectarians as the founder of a cult! Mme. Blavatsky vigorously denounced sacerdotalism, bigotry and modern "spiritualism," and declared that the greatest enemies of human progress are priestcraft and anthropomorphic religions. The subversion of her iconoclastic ideas came, no doubt, from misunderstanding of the constructive principles in her esoteric or scientific interpretation of the ancient Pantheons and the numerous progeny of popular gods and goddesses as being "intelligent atomic agents of universal Law". Men in general will always personify the impersonal, and to-day the abstruse results of physical researches are too "esoteric" for the theological type of mind who would formalize the formless and make the abstract concrete. Well do physicists know now "the illusive nature of matter and the [seemingly] infinite divisibility of the atom" (*ib.* i. 520), and they alone can be entertained by the sections in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* where the various hypotheses and theories, current in the nineteenth century,

* See *Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 254 (original edition)

on Light, Æther, Force, Modes of Motion, Nebular Origins, etc., are really amusingly and brilliantly arrayed and set-off one against the other. At this distance of time and with our present knowledge one's sense of humour succumbs to Mme. Blavatsky's wit, even though there may be certain resemblances between present controversies and battles long ago; and even though we may disagree with the author in many other respects. While pontifical utterances were her *bête noire*, some of her own were most uncompromising. The following are selected because of their extreme unorthodoxy at the time they were written:

Forces are not what modern learning would have them; e.g. *magnetism* is not a mode of motion. (*ib.* 516)

Gravity is only sympathy and antipathy, or attraction and repulsion, caused by physical polarity on our terrestrial plane and by spiritual causes outside of its influence (*ib.* 513: see also 604).

Inertia, so called, "is force" according to Newton (*Princ. Def. iii*), and for the student of Esoteric Sciences the greatest of the occult forces. A body may be considered divorced from its relations with other bodies—which, according to physical and mechanical sciences, give rise to its attributes—only *conceptually* . . . In fact, it can never be so detached; death itself being unable to detach it from its relation with the Universal forces, of which the one FORCE or LIFE is the synthesis. (*ib.* 511)

The turn of a four-dimensional world is near, but the puzzle of science will ever continue until their concepts reach the natural dimensions of visible and invisible space—in its septenary completeness . . . When demonstrated, the four-dimensional conception of space may lead to the invention of new instru-

ments to explore the extremely dense matter that surrounds us as a ball of pitch might surround—say a fly, but which, in our extreme ignorance of all its properties, save those we find it exercising on our earth, we yet call the *clear*, the *serene* and the *transparent* atmosphere . . . In less than a century, besides telescopes, microscopes, micrographs and telephones, the Royal Society will have to offer a premium for such an *etheroscope*! (*Five Years of Theosophy*, 247-8).

Before Hydrogen and Oxygen become what they are in *our* atmosphere they are interstellar Ether; still earlier and on a *deeper* plane something else, and so on *in infinitum*. (*S. D.* i. 626)

During the past century science has explored the states of energy ranging from molecular electricity, induced by Faraday in August 1831, to the "cosmic rays" of interstellar "matter". Will the next one-hundred years elucidate the nature of states as yet supersensible? Or, must we remain content to believe, as do some physicists, that the universe is the product of thought—and leave it at that? The ancients expressed the same conception—it is an "archaic doctrine"—but, according to Mme. Blavatsky, they investigated the nature and functions of thought and found it to be an electrodynamic energy functioning through 'ultra-sensible' states of light, "interstellar ether [Akasha] has more to do, however, with psychology than with physics." (*ib.* ii. 135)

The most alluring prospects for pure science at the close of the first cycle of electrical research appears to be in the mysterious transformations effected by polar propagation and reproduction with-

in and throughout space. Creation itself may be such a process. "The [great] 'Breath' produced or photographed the first divine IDEATION of the things to be" in the abysmal depths of space or chaos (*ib.* i. 375) is an idea variously expressed in many passages of Mme. Blavatsky's writings; but this was altered to read "produced or so to say photographed," by the editors who revised an edition (1893) of *The Secret Doctrine* after her death. This is only one of many instances of the lack of scientific understanding on the part of her public and especially of her self-constituted interpreters, for the same word is used with the same significance in foot-notes on pp. 18 and 530; and on p. 509 she tries to expound principles involved in "the fixing of light" for which no scientific technical

terms were then available. She evidently attached to "photography" a definite technical meaning for in *Isis Unveiled* she had written of photography as an *electrical process* accomplished by the molecular motions of the blind forces of Nature (i. 395); and later, on p. 463, describes an exhibition of the power of thought and will to produce a photograph. However, the question of moment in all this for science is, How did Mme. Blavatsky know in 1877 that photography is an electrical process? The important researches now progressing in photoelectric phenomena may yet substantiate her electromagnetic "theory" of thought and justify the physicists' dream of a thought-produced universe. If so, psychical research might become a true experimental science.

W. WILSON LEISENRING

If we give our attention but to the electric and magnetic fluids in men and animals, and the existing mysterious but undoubted interrelation between these two, as well as between both of them and plants and minerals, we will have an inexhaustible field of research, which may lead us to understand more easily the production of certain phenomena. The modification of the peripheral extremities of nerves by which electricity is generated and discharged in certain genera of fishes, is of the most wonderful character, and yet, to this very day its nature remains a mystery to exact science . . . Whence this electric power, and what is the ultimate nature and essence of the electric fluid? Whether as a cause or effect, a primary agent or a correlation, the reason for each of its manifestations is yet hypothetical. How much, or how little has it to do with vital power? Such are the ever-recurring and always unanswerable queries.

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*The Theosophist*, February, 1881.)

SUHRAWARDI

THE APOSTLE OF ILLUMINATION

[Dr. Margaret Smith contributed the third of her studies of great Sufis to our August number. The last one, on Al-Jili, will be published in December.

This particular instalment is very Theosophical. Suhrawardī does not only teach Reincarnation and Karma but also refers to the Immortality which every human soul must win by effort and discipline. He also hints at his knowledge of the Great Lodge of Adepts, headed by the Imam who is always hidden, and whose members influenced Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism; he also said that he taught the same truths as the Sages of Egypt, Greece and Persia. He paid with his life the price of his courageous declaration of Truth—he passed away when he was only thirty-six, but has lived ever since a glory to Sufism and a shame to priestcraft and orthodoxy.—EDS.]

Shihāb al-Dīn Yahya b. Ḥabāsh b. Amīrak al-Suhrawardī, called al-Maqtūl (the Slain), a native of Suhraward, was born about 1155. As a boy he shewed a great desire for learning and in pursuit of it went to Marāgha in Adarbājān, where he studied jurisprudence under Majd al-Dīn Jilī. He belonged at this time to the orthodox school of the Shāfi'ites and gained a great reputation for learning among his contemporaries. He went on to Isfahān, where he studied under Zāhir al-Dīn Farsī, and thence to Baghdad and Aleppo, where he applied himself to the study of philosophy. He was considered to be the leading scholar of his time in the philosophical sciences, and he was equally pre-eminent in his knowledge of jurisprudence. He was esteemed as an able thinker, possessed of great powers of penetration, and with the gift of expressing his ideas with clearness and precision; but one who knew him observed that his learning was greater than his judgment. He gave himself

the title of "The Seeker of the Invisible World" (al-murīd bi'l malakūt) and became so absorbed in his mystical studies that he renounced all worldly enjoyments. From this time on he led a life of extreme asceticism, and by his acts of penance, carried out with a view to spiritual purification, he reached the stage of an adept in the Sūfī Path, and attained to the mystical experience of ecstasy, and felt that he had passed into union with the Divine.

During his stay in Baghdad, Suhrawardī held the office of Chief Shaykh, and was several times the messenger of the Caliph to different courts; for his services he received large payments, which he distributed to the poor. Finally, he went on pilgrimage to Mecca, and took with him a number of poor men, whose expenses he paid. On his return from Mecca, he settled down in Aleppo, to live the life of a Sūfī and a philosopher. There he acquired a considerable influence over the Viceroy Malik al-Zāhir, a son of the Sultan

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (Saladin), who was his patron for some time. But *though Suhrawardī was outwardly an orthodox Muslim, and wrote in Arabic, veiling his secret teaching under a technical terminology, unintelligible except to the initiated, his mysticism made him suspect, and he roused the hostility of the 'Ulemā.* These latter drew up a protocol in which they accused the Shaykh of heresy, and they sent this document to the Sultan, warning him that if Suhrawardī remained in proximity to his son the Viceroy, the latter's religion would be endangered, and stating further that Suhrawardī, wherever he went, was a cause of unrest. Saladin, on receiving this report, sent the order for Suhrawardī to be put to death. His former patron, Malik al-Zāhir, was loath to carry out such an order and delayed its execution, and was only induced to obey it by the receipt of a threatening letter from his father.

Jāmī and others state that he was given his choice of the death by which he should die, and choosing to die of hunger, he was immured in a cell, and food and drink withheld from him "until he passed into that world for which he yearned". Shortly before his death he is said to have recited these lines:

Speak to my friends when they look upon
me dead,
Who mourn me there, when they behold my
corpse.
Do not believe that this poor corpse is
myself,
In the name of God, I tell you, it is not I
who am dead.
I am a bird, and this body was only my cage,

Whence I have now flown forth,
To-day I hold converse with my Lord,
And I look upon God face to face.

He was put to death in 1191, when he was only thirty-six years of age. By the order of the Viceroy al-Zāhir, his body was buried outside the city, and according to one account the following verses were seen written over his tomb:

This grave is the shrine of a precious jewel,
Which God created according to a Divine
type.
The world did not recognise his worth.
There lies he, the pearl which has returned
to the shell whence it came.

His grave, though it no longer bears this inscription, is still to be seen, and is still remembered as that of al-Maqtūl (the Slain). While some of his contemporaries regarded him as a heretic and his opinions as heterodox many others revered him as a saint who had attained to spiritual perfection; in his lifetime he was credited with the gift of miracles, and after his death much evidence was forthcoming of the wonders he had performed. The many legends concerning him prove that his life and death made a very real impression on the people of Aleppo, and that his teaching had a widespread influence. In the opinion of Jāmī, he had attained to the complete sincerity of the true saint; by his contemplation of the Divine Light, he himself became illuminated, and "in the service of the sun, he became a perfect moon". He had known the mystic experience, and having attained to the unitive life, he abode therein.

Though Suhrawardī himself paid for the originality of his ideas

by his early death, his teaching lived on after him. At the time of his execution, under the superintendence of the Qādī of Baghdad, the whole of his library was committed to the flames, but while the Arabs did their best to destroy his writings and so to prevent the dissemination of his doctrines, his works were preserved from extinction by the Persians and Turks. He wrote a number of books setting forth his doctrine of Illumination, of which the most important were the *Hikmat al-Ishrāq* (the Philosophy of Illumination) and the *Hayākil al-Nūr* (the Temples of Light). In these books and especially in the "Philosophy of Illumination," Suhrawardī gives us his doctrine of God and the soul and the nature of the universe.

In the preface to the "Philosophy of Illumination," he says, addressing his friends and companions:—

You requested me to write a book setting forth the spiritual experiences vouchsafed to me, when I was meditating in solitude, and was undergoing discipline in retreat, that is, when I was in a state of withdrawal from bodily things and material states and in union with spiritual, luminous, immaterial beings.*

Suhrawardī goes on to claim as his forerunners the Greek philosophers, Agathodaemon, Hermes, Empedocles, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and the Persian teachers Jāmāsp and Buzurgmihr.† He refers to the different classes of philosophers;

the theosophist (the one versed in Divine knowledge) without knowledge of speculative philosophy, the philosopher without theosophy, and those who have knowledge of both theosophy and philosophy, but are strong in one and weak in the other, and he concludes that if in one person is combined a complete knowledge of both theosophy and philosophy, that one is the representative of God on earth. There never fails to be one great theosophist in the world, but sometimes the "Imām who has the gift of interpretation," the Qutb (Axis or Pole, the name given to the head of the spiritual hierarchy of the Sūfīs) is visible, and sometimes hidden.‡ It is to those who seek for theosophic knowledge by philosophic means that Suhrawardī addresses himself, and to those who study and accept his teaching he promises the Divine illumination and appropriation thereof.

His conception of God is pantheistic in so far as he regards God as being the sum total of all existence, both phenomenal and ideal. We have a beautiful prayer of his, which reveals his view of God as the Self-Existent, the sole Reality!

O my God, Thou Lord of all that exists, of all intellectual beings and all sensible things. Thou Giver of minds and souls, who hast laid the foundations of the world. O First Cause of all existence and Dispenser of all bounty, Thou Maker of hearts and spirits, and Fashioner of forms and bodies; O Light

of lights and Ruler of all the spheres, Thou art the First, there was none before Thee; Thou art the Last, there shall be none after Thee. The angels are not able to comprehend Thy Majesty, and man cannot attain to a knowledge of Thy Perfect Essence. O God, set us free from the fetters of this world and of the flesh and deliver us from all evil that may hinder us. Send down upon our spirits Thy gracious Influence and pour forth upon our souls the bright beams of Thy Light. The mind of man is but one drop in the ocean of Thy kingdom and the soul is but a spark of Thy Divine Majesty. Praise be to Him whom the sight cannot perceive, nor the thought conceive of His likeness. To Thee be thanksgiving and praise; Thou dost give and Thou dost take away. Thou art the All-Bountiful and the All-Abiding. Praise be to Him, for His is the power over all things and unto Him shall ye return.**

Suhrawardī's idea of the nature of God is in accordance with his doctrine of illumination, and the Godhead Itself he calls the "Light of Lights" (Nūr al-Anwār). He develops his idea of God in the "Temples of Light," where, after proving the Divine Unity by the orthodox arguments, he speaks of God as Eternal, manifest through His Essence; He is the Light of lights, but veiled before the eyes of men by the very brightness of that Light. It was upon the teaching of orthodox Islām that Suhrawardī was able to base this doctrine of God as Absolute Light, for the Prophet had said that God was veiled in seventy veils of light, and that He was the Light of heaven and earth and among the invocations attributed to the Prophet was this:—

O Light of light, Thou art veiled to Thy creature and it does not attain to Thy light. O Light of light, Thy light illuminates the people of earth. O Light of all light, Thy Light is praised by all light.

The essential nature of the Primal Absolute Light, that is, of God, consists in perpetual illumination, whereby It is manifested forth. It is the source of all life, in that It brings all things into existence by pouring out its rays into their being. "Everything in the world is derived from the Light of His Essence, and all beauty and perfection are the gift of His bounty, and full attainment (of illumination) is salvation."† Those existences which take their being directly from the Primal Light in their turn become the sources of lesser illuminations, and so the multiplicity of existences comes into being from the diffusion of the Light of the One, and all is dependent upon That. Since from light can come forth only light, and that Light is the only existent Reality, therefore darkness is non-existent, the negation of Light, which the Light illuminates in order that it may manifest itself. This is Suhrawardī's doctrine of "Illumination," with God as the Light of lights, the creative Source of the irradiation of light to all that is. To Suhrawardī, therefore, Light is identical with Reality and with all true Life.

From this theory of Illumination, it follows that the human soul is in its nature Divine; the lowest form of existence posits the

* *Hikmat al-Ishrāq*. fol. 6a.

† *Ibid.* fol. 9a.

‡ *Ibid.* fol. 936 b.

* *Manājāt* MS. Cairo VII 624

† *Hikmat al-Ishrāq* fol. 5b

highest, since it is ultimately derived from that. Human souls Suhrawardī calls the "pure, dominating lights" (al-anwār, al-mujarrada al-mudabbira) than which none are nearer to the Light of lights, and none receive more illumination, save the celestial beings. Because the human soul partakes of the Divine Light in so great a measure, it must give illumination in its turn, and also must seek ever more and more illumination for itself, and strive to draw nearer and nearer to the Light of lights, until at length it becomes one again with that Primal Light.

The evil in the world, to Suhrawardī, is less than the good and can be overcome by the good, as the darkness, which has no real existence, is overcome by light, and it is by the human will, directed towards good and helped by the Divine power, that evil will be overcome.

Know that the souls, if the heavenly illuminations endure in them, reduce the material world to obedience. Their prayers are heard in the higher world, and Fate has already decreed that the prayers of these persons for such an object should be heard. The light which streams forth from the highest world is the Elixir of power and knowledge and the lower world obeys it. In the purified souls is reproduced a reflection of the Divine Light and a creative ray (nūr khallāq) is focussed on them.*

As we have noted, it was the nature of the Primal Light to manifest itself by illumination; a more orthodox Sūfi, or a Christian

mystic, might have expressed it as the will of God that the soul should ascend again to its Source, but while illumination was the pre-determined gift of God, it was for the human soul to strive to be worthy of it and to gain it in fullest measure, and so we find that Suhrawardī laid stress upon the need for effort; the soul was free to fall back or to rise upwards, and its evolution and final attainment depended upon its own will to progress. The first step on the Path must be renunciation of all hindrances and a steadfast turning towards the goal. Suhrawardī cries shame upon those who linger in the darkness, for, he says, "in truth you belong to the kingdom of heaven, and for the bodies darkened by sin, the realm of the heavens is forbidden". In certain of his verses he writes of the soul and its pre-existence, of how it deserted the abodes of this world in longing for its former spiritual abode, and went to and fro seeking how it might once again return to its home in God. Again he writes of the soul's desire for God:

Our spirits ever yearn for Thee, and to meet with Thee would be to them as fragrance and old wine. The hearts of these Thy lovers crave for Thee and hasten towards the joy of meeting with Thee. The Divine Voice has called unto them, and they remain obedient unto the call.†

The practice of asceticism, since the soul needed purification before it was fit to receive greater

illumination, and of withdrawal into solitude, had been his own method of treading the Path, and so Suhrawardī recommends it to other aspirants to spiritual perfection, to be combined with the service of those who have already attained to "vision". Progress on the Path, and the evolution of the soul, until by increased illumination it becomes completely free of the material, and wholly spiritual, is accomplished by knowledge and action. Knowledge can be attained by the use of reason, and Suhrawardī would have the seeker acquaint himself with Aristotelian philosophy, logic, mathematics and Sūfism, in order to rid his mind of prejudice and sin, so that he may develop that inner sense, the spiritual perception (dhawq), which transcends the intellect, and by which alone the aspirant can come to the knowledge of spiritual mysteries. By means of knowledge, the traveller on the Path acquires virtue and so acts in accordance with his higher nature; and through knowledge and virtue combined, the soul frees itself gradually from the world of darkness.

As we come to know more and more of the nature of things we are brought nearer and nearer to the world of light, and the love of that world becomes more intense. The stages of spiritual development are infinite, since the stages of love are infinite."

In Suhrawardī's view, death does not necessarily mean the end of the spiritual progress of the

soul. Some souls, he considers, may have to come back to earth to make up their deficiencies, and there take up a body and a status determined by the experience of a former life. But all souls are journeying towards God, and when the process of evolution is completed they must reach their goal in Him.

When the work of purification is complete, and the senses have been brought into subjection by self-discipline, and the soul, by removing the veils between it and the Primal Light, has been enabled to receive more and more illumination, then it attains to the Sūfi's goal, the Divine Vision and union with the One.

The seeker begins with the senses, then he progresses and rises to the world of certainty (when he knows the Divine mysteries, not by hearsay, but by direct, spiritual experience), and thence higher still to the Divine world.*

From the stage of "I" he passes to the stage of "I am not" and "Thou art,"—the negation of the "I" and the assertion of the "Thou,"—and thence to the stage of "I am not and Thou art not," for he is himself now one with the One. The vision of God and the apprehension of Him, and the acquiring of His Light, mean unification and union ("ittiṣāl" and "ittiḥād"), with His very Essence, the Light of lights.†

The least degree to which the reader of this book should attain is that the Divine Radiance should be revealed to

* *Temple of Light*. Ch. IV, Sect. 1

† MS. Add. 16, 232 No. XII (Brit. Mus.)

* *Hikmat al-Ishrāq*. fol. 6b.

† *Ibid.* fol. 5a.

him, and should enter into him and become his own.*

Suhrawardī's teaching is a deeply interesting commingling of philosophy and mysticism. He himself claims that his philosophy is the same as that of the ancient sages of Egypt, Greece, and Persia, who had taught the same doctrine under different metaphors. He gathers up threads derived from Neo-Platonic doctrine, Hermetic conceptions, Gnostic teachings, Neo-Pythagorean elements and Zoroastrian ideas, and weaves them into one harmonious whole, which is deeply affected by the monotheistic teaching of Islām, and is further influenced by the Persian Shī'ite doctrine of the hidden Imām. He presents his teaching under the terminology

of the Sūfis, and makes of it a thoroughly Persian system of mysticism, which has had a profound influence upon succeeding generations of Sūfis and philosophers.

Yet Suhrawardī is no mere philosopher, presenting only a mystical theory to his readers; he was a practical mystic, knowing by personal experience the Path to be trodden, and he knew that spiritual evolution was only to be accomplished by severe self-discipline, and the will, combined with earnest effort, to aim always at the highest and the best, in conduct and in knowledge; the human must look always up to the Divine. "With Thee is the Well of Life," he would have said with the Psalmist, "and in Thy Light shall we see light."

MARGARET SMITH

Ammian, in his history of Julian's Persian expedition, gives the story by stating that one day Hystaspes, as he was boldly penetrating into the unknown regions of Upper India, had come upon a certain wooded solitude, the tranquil recesses of which were "occupied by those exalted sages, the Brachmanes (or Shamans). Instructed by their teaching in the science of the motions of the world and of the heavenly bodies, and in pure religious rites . . . he transfused them into the creed of the Magi. The latter, coupling these doctrines with their own peculiar science of foretelling the future, have handed down the whole through their descendants to succeeding ages". (xxxiii, 6.) It is from these descendants that the Sufis, chiefly composed of Persians and Syrians, acquired their proficient knowledge in astrology, medicine, and the esoteric doctrine of the ages.

H. P. BLAVATSKY. (*Isis Unveiled*. II, 306.)

*Op. cit. fol. 95a

My references are to the MS. of the *Hikmat al-Ishrāq* in the Brit. Mus. Arund. Or. 36. For accounts of Suhrawardī's doctrines, cf. A. von Kremer *Geschichte der herr. Ideen des Islam*, Carra de Vaux. J. A. Tom. XII 1902, and M. Iqbāl; *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, and for his life cf. Jāmī's *Nafahāt al-Uns*, and Ibn Khallikān's *Biographical Dictionary*.

BRADLEY AND THE "BHAGAVAD-GITA"

[M. A. Venkata Rao, M.A., wrote on Karma and Kant in our May number. In this article he draws a very interesting parallel. He asks, however, a question which has puzzled many students of the *Gita*—how are Gunas acquired? Theosophy would answer—they are not acquired; they inhere in that aspect of the One Life called matter. If Purusha cannot be said to acquire Sat-Chit-Ananda, so also Prakriti in reference to Tamas-Rajas-Sattva. Confusion arises because Spirit and Matter are separated, whereas they are an inseparable pair. We append three extracts and suggest that our author and others in a similar position give them their most earnest consideration.—EDS.]

There is a suggestive approach between F. H. Bradley's Ethical Doctrine summed up in the famous phrase "My station and its Duties," and the Doctrine of Swadharma (or one's own duty) inculcated in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The *Gita* weaves together many other strands of thought and Bradley has a different spiritual atmosphere but the parallelism in regard to this point is so close that his chapter entitled "My Station and its Duties" seems to be an unconscious commentary on the *Gita*.

A. PHILOSOPHIC BACKGROUND. Bradley's philosophy is a seamless unity. His ethics are a logical outcome of his metaphysics. He derives the nature and destiny of man from the constitution of the universe. According to him the universe is the manifestation of the Supreme Spirit. All things in the universe are its appearances or expressions in different degrees. Man is a higher manifestation than all the other beings we know. Bradley's Absolute has many essential features in common with the Brahman or Parabrahman of Shankara. Space, time, cause, mo-

tion, quality, relation, matter and self are all partial features within the universe but break down when applied to the Absolute. The Absolute is not a mere aggregation of these aspects. Comprehensiveness and inner consistency are the two aspects of the one criterion of Reality. We cannot within our finite limitations realise the Absolute in fulness but the attempt to do so is the spring of all progress. We may not understand in detail how all the aspects of the universe are held together in the Absolute, but in knowledge, feeling and action, truth, beauty and goodness, we have glimpses of a unitary life holding a myriad distinctions in harmony. These glimpses indicate enough of the nature of the Absolute for us to guide our steps in this pilgrimage.

B. ETHICS. Bradley develops his ethics by means of a criticism and synthesis of opposing theories. He formulates his doctrine of "My Station and its Duties" as a synthesis of Hedonism which he characterises as Pleasure for Pleasure's sake, and of Rationalism which he calls Duty for Duty's sake.

1. *Hedonism: Pleasure for Pleasure's sake.* Hedonism tries to formulate the supreme good in terms of pleasure and satisfaction. Bradley points out that pleasures as states of feeling can yield no principle of harmony or organisation capable of welding the sporadic impulses of our nature into an integral whole. They are isolated, particular and blind. They are tied down to particular needs of the organism and to features of the environment, deriving all their worth and colour from the content, the things that satisfy and the aspects of the soul that are satisfied. Mill's distinction of quality among pleasures gives up the case for hedonism because it abandons pleasure as an ultimate principle and introduces the objects of pleasure as determinants of value. Bentham's quantitative determination of pleasure and Mill's moral almanac are both unworkable. They do not explain the sense of obligation which is distinctive of the moral life, and reduce the purity of the motive to mere expediency and habit. Thus pleasure as an ultimate principle pulverises the moral life into throbs of atomic satisfaction, can give no scale of values and yield no principle of harmonious organisation.

2. *Rationalism: Duty for Duty's sake.* Bradley then considers the Rationalistic ideal of Duty for Duty's sake and points out its "emptiness". If Hedonism reduced life to a string of "blind impulses," Rationalism reduces it to a string without beads, form without con-

tent. He takes up Kant's Categorical Imperative and elicits its essential weakness as an abstract universal. Kant omits feeling from the life of morality and lays down the criterion of universality and self-consistency. Duty is self-consistent action; the good will is the will capable of being universalised. Bradley points out that this is essentially impossible. To realise a will is to embody it in particular situations; to particularise it is to do away with its universality! Further, there is no action which can be universalised. All duties are particular duties in particular situations. Obedience is a duty of people in certain situations. It is not the duty of all in all circumstances. All duties have exceptions. What is universally binding is not a rule, but the end which is righteousness. Kant provides no room for conflict of duties or for subordination of a lesser to a higher duty.

3. *Synthesis of Hedonism and Rationalism: My Station and its Duties.* Bradley goes on to develop his theory of "My Station and its Duties" as a synthesis of the elements of value in both hedonism and rationalism. The ideal is a life lived in organic membership of a social whole, which yields a position charged with a scheme of duties and relationships. Man finds himself in a particular society in a particular epoch. He grows up absorbing the "ethos" of the social life around him. His mind is fostered by the code rights and duties, preferences and prohibitions constituting the active spirit

of the positive morality of the life around him. *The universal is not floating in the air but is embedded in the customs and manners, the culture and tradition of a people.* We must occupy some position and grasp the inwardness of the spiritual environment in which we grow and fulfil the duties attaching to our position. Such acceptance leads us out of ourselves and gives us clues to a larger insight, in the endeavour to incorporate which, lies happiness here on earth. This view includes pleasure as a constituent of the good life. It makes room for duty in the form of obligation to the spirit embodied in society and our own inmost self. The ethical life is a progressive increase in insight into the life of the supreme spirit in society expressing itself inevitably in a progressive incorporation of such insight in vision, feeling and action from the vantage ground of a particular station in society. The strength of this view consists in the fact that the moral life is interpreted in the light of its relationship to the larger whole of the universal life. The supreme spirit runs in all things. *Man is a self-conscious embodiment of the Absolute. His destiny is to bring into harmonious expression the implicit universal urging for realisation in the inmost constitution of his nature.* Such realisation is a life of activity, an activity that "internalises" the universe in truth, beauty and goodness in the milieu of a social whole. Man's life is a microcosm focusing the universe in the medium of personality.

II

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

A. PHILOSOPHIC BACKGROUND. The philosophy of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is rich to the point of eclecticism. It is a fusion and summation of all the elements of higher Hindu thought. It is mainly a re-definition of the Vedantic Absolute in the interests of active ethical life. The world is regarded as the emanation of the Supreme Spirit whose nature is an integral harmony of Sat or Existence, Chit or Consciousness and Ananda or Joy.

Whatever creature is permanent, of good fortune or mighty, also know it to be sprung from a portion of my energy. (x. 41.)

I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate. (x. 42.)

It is, therefore, the destiny of all creatures to return to Deity. This return is the realisation of oneness with It. It is Yoga or reunion. It is brought about by moksha or liberation from the bonds of ignorance arising from absorption in the here and the now. The Jiva or soul finds itself embodied in an organism and surrounded by an external universe soliciting the senses under a myriad "names and forms". Its destiny is to free itself from being "lost" in the particulars of sense, internal impulse or external sensation, and win a vision of the Supreme. The purusha is to free itself from prakriti and stand forth as pure radiance shining with its own light which is also the light of the universe, for after

all, the Atman and the Paramatman are identical in essence.

B. ETHICS. The individual soul or Jiva has for its ideal the realisation of identity with the Supreme. In accordance with the tripartite distinction of consciousness into its aspects, the *Gita* lays down a threefold path of realisation:—Jnana Marga or way of thought, Bhakti Marga or way of feeling, and Karma Marga or way of action. Different schools of commentators place exclusive emphasis upon one or other of these ways of identification. But it is difficult to accept any one emphasis as the last word of the *Gita*. For it goes on to develop the doctrine of Swadharma on the basis of the three gunas:—the Satwa or Purity (Rational harmony), the Rajas or Passion (Spirit of Attachment) and the Tamas or Darkness (Inertia). This disposition of the *Gita* to trace outward ways of life to the internal constitution suggests the natural conclusion that these ways of life are of equal value, all preference being left to individual choice and endowment. Further, the doctrine of Swadharma founded on the Guna hypothesis, individual duty founded on psychological and spiritual endowment, is one of the most important contributions to ethical theory. Bradley's doctrine of "My Station and its Duties" is a most suggestive parallel though much simpler in outline. The *Gita* declares that every man has his own duty to perform in this world, his own niche to occupy in the order of

things.

Men being contented and devoted to their own proper duties attain perfection. (xviii. 45.)

The performance of the duties of a man's own particular calling, although devoid of excellence, is better than doing the duty of another, however well performed; and he who fulfils the duties obligated by nature, does not incur sin. (xviii. 47.)

The *Gita* founds this doctrine of Swadharma or one's own duty on the psychic endowment of the individual on the Guna hypothesis.

The respective duties of the four castes, of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sûdras, are also determined by the qualities which predominate in the disposition of each, O harasser of thy foes. (xviii. 41.)

And in subsequent verses the qualities are enumerated.

But none of these is inferior as a way of realisation to the others, for:—

If a man maketh offering to the Supreme Being who is the source of the works of all and by whom this universe was spread abroad, he thus obtaineth perfection. (xviii. 46.)

Thus action in harmony with one's deepest nature inspired with the consciousness of Duty is the same as devotion to the Supreme Spirit and is the high road to "the peace that passeth all understanding". This view of the moral life—with the mind fixed on the ideal and free from the overwhelming urge of chance desires—leads to the sublime ideals of "Sthitaprajna" or "steadfast-in-mind" and of "Nishkama Karma" or disinterested action. Such equanimity of spirit and of disinterestedness of service

are implied in Bradley but are not developed explicitly. Bradley is more interested in pointing out that his doctrine is capable of yielding a comprehensive vision of moral reality which shall include the stuff of life and the harmony thereof, the content and the form.

III

There is thus a striking similarity between Bradley and the *Bhagavad-Gita* in their view of Duty or Dharma. Both point to one's station in society and the duties flowing therefrom as the path of realisation. But in Bradley there is no explicit indication of how one is to discover one's station in life. Is it to be determined by accident of birth or fortune, or actively sought in accordance with the needs of one's developing nature? Of course, the positive morality or the complex of rights and duties, choices and aversions, implicit in the life of a community does open up the mind to vistas of larger life and fresh directions of possibility. But Bradley does not develop this idea into fuller detail. He contents himself with pointing the finger of scorn at empty-headed enthusiasts who pine for a life above their station. "... to wish to be better than the world is to be already on the threshold of immorality." (*Ethical Studies*: p. 199) Referring to impatient theories and frantic passions which aim at self-cultivation apart from society he laughs at the literature of sentimentalism—

at its frenzied apotheosis of the yet unsatisfied passion it calls love; at that

embitterment too which has lost its illusions and yet cannot let them go—with its kindness for the genius too clever in general to do anything in particular and its adoration of star-gazing virgins with souls above their spheres whose wish to be something in the world takes the form of wanting to do something with it and who in the end do badly what they might have done in the beginning well—(*Ethical Studies*, pp. 201-2).

If one forgets the depth and reach of Bradley's idealism, one is repelled at the chill of his irony in this connection. But the *Gita* with its theory of Gunas or threefold qualities carries us a step deeper in social analysis and points out that one's station is to be determined by one's own inner nature.

The three great qualities called *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—light or truth, passion or desire, and indifference or darkness—are born from nature, and bind the imperishable soul to the body, O thou of mighty arms. Of these the *sattva* quality by reason of its lucidity and peacefulness entwineth the soul to rebirth through attachment to knowledge and that which is pleasant. Know that *rajas* is of the nature of desire, producing thirst and propensity; it, O son of Kunti, imprisoneth the Ego through the consequences produced from action. The quality of *tamas*, the offspring of the indifference in nature, is the deluder of all creatures, O son of Bharata; it imprisoneth the Ego in a body through heedless folly, sleep, and idleness. (xiv, 5-8)

But even the *Gita* does not seem clear as to how these Gunas are acquired. It implies the theory of Karma and rebirth. But after all the endowment of human beings is not as simple and determinate as that of plants or animals. It is wider and infinitely

more many-sided in susceptibility. Human careers are practically endless and perhaps the Guna that is really determinant of character and destiny is a complex resultant developed by action and reaction in the stress and strain of life. So that for all practical purposes all stations in society may be filled satisfactorily by any member of it provided the society furnishes a many-sided environment, physical and spiritual, calling out in a myriad ways the aptitudes and powers hidden in the depths of individuals. This vagueness both of Bradley's doctrine of "My Station and its Duties" and of the Swadharma of the *Bhagavad-Gita* renders them liable to be interpreted in terms of conventional social divisions and ranks current in societies in different epochs. Bradley's stations may be those of the governing classes, the scholar or the soldier, of the trading middle classes or those of the working classes. What if a working class individual demands a station higher than the one into which he is born? Similarly, the *Gita's* Swadharma is liable to be interpreted in terms of caste determined beyond redemption in this life by the accident of birth. Indeed, the *Gita* Verse:—

A man's own natural duty, even though stained with faults ought not to be abandoned. For all human acts are involved in faults, as the fire is wrapped in smoke (xviii. 48)

is not free from the danger of excessive emphasis on birth though in this context the particular sta-

tions are regarded as of no account so long as the spirit of unattachment is maintained. But the spirit of Bradlean idealism and of the Vedantic element in the *Gita* suggests correctives for such narrow interpretations. Active acceptance not of mere outward custom nor of a crystallized code of duty but of the insight dwelling in them—acceptance of the impulse to universality operating in them, is the stamp of true morality. Acceptance is the prelude to adventure. Life suggests its own transcendence; wider horizons spring in the soul when each round of life is lived through, but pious intentions lead nowhere. Further, "life is short and art is long". One cannot spend a whole life searching for one's vocation. One must begin somewhere. All expansion requires a centre and a field. All growth requires a root and an atmosphere. And after all, the real stuff of character is wrought out by emotion and action in specific situations. But a healthy and progressive society must provide institutions or a milieu for the discovery and culture of the gunas or aptitudes of its members. This note of social idealism is left unduly in the background both in the *Gita* and in Bradley. Thus both in strength and in limitation there is a striking parallelism between European idealism as represented by F. H. Bradley and Hindu Dharma Shastra as represented by the *Bhagavad-Gita* alike in cosmic outlook and vision of individual destiny.

M. A. VENKATA RAO

Know the three-fold egoity or self-consciousness (Abankara) to be the *Satvika*, or self-consciousness of Truth or Goodness; the *Rajasa*, or self-consciousness of Passion; and the *Tamasa*, or self-consciousness of Darkness; in each of which respectively, a power or energy peculiar to it, appears radiantly developed.

In the self-consciousness of Truth or Goodness, is the power or energy of knowledge or wisdom; in the self-consciousness of Passion, resideth the power or energy of action; in the self-consciousness of Darkness, existeth incessantly the power or energy of substance or matter (dravya).

Viveka Sindhu, III., v. 72, 73. (Quoted in *The Dream of Ravan*, p. 44)

The fact is, that all the three "persons" of the Trimūrti are simply the three qualificative *gunas* or attributes of the universe of differentiated Spirit-Matter, self-formative, self-preserving and self-destroying, for purposes of regeneration and perfectibility. This is the correct meaning; and it is shown in Brahmā being made the personified embodiment of *Rajoguna*, the attribute or quality of activity, of desire for procreation, that desire owing to which the universe and everything in it is called into being. Vishnu is the embodied *Sattvaguna*, that property of preservation arising from quietude and restful enjoyment, which characterizes the intermediate period between the full growth and the beginning of decay; while Shiva, being embodied *Tamoguna*—which is the attribute of stagnancy and final decay—becomes of course the destroyer. This is as highly philosophical under its mask of anthropomorphism, as it is unphilosophical and absurd to hold to and enforce on the world the dead letter of the original conception.

Theosophical Glossary, pp., 340-1

Three distinct representations of the Universe in its three distinct aspects are impressed upon our thought by the esoteric philosophy: the PRE-EXISTING (evolved from) the EVER-EXISTING; and the PHENOMENAL—the world of illusion, the reflection, and shadow thereof. During the great mystery and drama of life known as the Manvantara, real Kosmos is like the object placed behind the white screen upon which are thrown the Chinese shadows, called forth by the magic lantern. The actual figures and things remain invisible, while the wires of evolution are pulled by the unseen hands; and men and things are thus but the reflections, on the white field, of the realities behind the snares of *Mahamaya*, or the great Illusion.

H. P. BLAVATSKY (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 278)

BUDDHISM UNITED JAPAN

[Kanesada Hanazono, M. A., is a professor of Waseda University, Tokyo, and also editorial writer for the *Tokyo Nichi-Nichi*, of which he was the correspondent at the Washington Conference in 1922. In 1923 he visited India and strengthened his sympathy for the Indian people. He is a Buddhist by birth and upbringing. He is well known in Japan as the translator of Tagore's works. His contributions on the history of Japanese journalism are highly spoken of.—EDS]

The ancient history of Japan is shrouded in mist and myth. No one seems to know any more about the beginnings of the Japanese race than about those of the Chinese, or, for the matter of that, of the Teutonic races. A characteristic of the Japanese history is the abruptness with which appeared a considerably advanced civilization, which could hardly be expected of a primitive and barbarous race. Any visitor to the different Japanese museums will be puzzled to see articles of great beauty being placed side by side with archaeological finds belonging to the stone age.

The introduction of Buddhism into Japan through Korea in 552 A. D. was a great event in the history of the country. It followed certain migrations of the Koreans into Japan. From time to time they came and taught weaving and building, letters and medicine. The path had thus been paved for the introduction of Buddhism, but a high civilization must be presumed to have existed for the acceptance of its deep truths. The introduction of this faith by the Koreans gave rise to severe strife between those who entertained the old traditional belief and those

who had accepted the new alien religion.

It is interesting to observe that the introduction of Buddhism into Japan synchronised with the first remarkable movement for unification of the people. Two hypotheses are possible as explanations; one is that for the unification of the country Buddhism was invited to act, and the other is that the introduction of the new religion resulted in the solidification of the nation.

Opposition was very strong against Buddhism. Its advent was in the reign of the Emperor Kimmei (540-571) who became one of its most devout followers. He was pleased to receive contributions from Korea, consisting of a gold image of Gautama Buddha, some silk umbrellas for abbots and a number of volumes of sutras, as well as a message from the King of Korea. The message reads thus:

Of all religions, Buddhism is the noblest. It is the most difficult to understand and believe in. Even the Chinese King Chou and the Sage Confucius were ignorant of the religion. Originating in India it was brought to Korea over the Continent. On the way, many people who heard the preaching accepted Buddhism. Buddha had predicted that the religion would go eastward. And now it goes to an eastern empire to spread there.

Forthwith the Emperor pronounced that he had never known such a supreme teaching as Buddhism before. In spite of the old and new groups he firmly stood for Buddhism. All the island people of Japan were easily converted to Buddhism when they learned that the emperor had accepted it as his own faith.

Thus under Buddhism the entire country began to be more unified than it had ever been since the establishment of the state in 660 B. C. by the first emperor Jimmu.

In 593 A. D., forty years after the introduction of Buddhism, Shootoku Taishi or Prince Shootoku became Imperial Regent. It was a most remarkable period of unification of the country because of the development of Buddhism. The Prince established Buddhist temples in different parts of the country, which became centres of culture, law and order. It was the prince himself also who in 604 promulgated the first constitution of 17 Articles. He, too, sent the first Government mission to China to bring back some fruits of Chinese civilisation and to improve the relations between the Asiatic peoples. He built the Horyu-ji Temple in Nara which exists to this day. Though opinions differ as to whether the present temple is exactly that which was built by the prince, or whether it was rebuilt later, it must be the oldest wooden building in the world, and its site is as ancient as that of Canterbury Cathedral or Westminster Abbey in England.

Shootoku introduced the Calendar into Japan. Further historical research of this period remains to be made to ascertain fully the intellectual status of the subjects of this prince who, seen in every light, was the greatest prince in our history. The Constitution of 17 Articles which he promulgated was Buddhist in principle and was the Magna Charta of Japan. It not only gave regulations for the maintenance of law and order, but also rules of ethics. This act alone shows how greatly Buddhism contributed to the welfare of the state and united the whole people.

The establishment of the capital of the country at Nara in 710 marks the time when Japanese Buddhism fully began to blossom. In Japan, the state capital had been changed whenever a new emperor was enthroned (with a few exceptions), since the first emperor Jimmu; the establishment of Nara as capital was the natural result of closer relations with China. Seven succeeding emperors lived in Nara and built large Buddhist temples, some of which are to be seen now. Many more temples were built throughout the country. An Imperial Edict promulgated in 741 by the Emperor Shomu ordered each province to establish one Buddhist temple with twenty priests attached. In 749, the Emperor with grand ceremony was pleased to be ordained by the Rev. Ganjin, the Chinese priest, and called himself Buddha's servant. The ceremony was conducted in the presence of

the Empress, the Prince Imperial and hundreds of Government officials. The Empress was also a strong believer in Buddhism and often visited the poor and sick.

Chinese civilisation saw its replica in Japan in the Nara period. In administrative form, in thought, in art and literature, Japan copied China. The Government sent many students to China; returning home they rendered much service to the country in the upliftment of Japanese civilisation.

The first military regime in Japan started with the establishment of government in Kamakura by a soldier, a general, Minamoto-no-Yoritomo, in 1180; even then the principle of statecraft was Chinese. It was established on the model of a similar form of administration which was followed at one time in China in the government by the strongest duke of that time as the King's representative. In Japan this style of government existed until the Imperial Restoration.

The ideological foundation of social order and individual morals in the Kamakura period was entirely Buddhist, for Buddhism was prevalent throughout the country at that time, though diversified in denominations old and new. The everyday language of the people then contained many Buddhist phrases, some of which are still in daily use. The unification of language was also due to Buddhist priests.

Just after the Imperial Restoration of 1868 a movement was started against Buddhism under the slogan that "everything must be new". The Government tried its best to stamp out Buddhism, first separating Shinto shrines from Buddhist temples, since these had been united for a long time. Shintoism is a religion of Japanese Imperial deities. For a long time the unified teaching of Shintoism and Buddhism ruled this country. The people would go for worship to Shinto shrines; to Buddhist temples to pay homage to Buddha and to hear sermons; to their family tombs, as part of their life of natural piety. The Government after the revolution of 1868 wanted a complete change in everything. Buddhism would have fallen a victim to this movement, had it not been for the determined opposition offered by some Buddhist saints and people. The policy of the new Government to estrange Shintoism from Buddhism and make the former the State religion failed, and there set in a new revival of Buddhism.

As a unifying force Buddhism still has the nation under its influence. Although some of the old ideas are crumbling before the onslaught of the new, such as those of Marxism, Buddhism with its profound and comprehensive doctrine, containing universal truth, seems to remain the guiding faith of the people of Japan.

KANESADA HANAZONO

IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE JESUITS

[Ronald A. L. M. Armstrong studied Jesuitry some years ago, and of course found it wanting. He is inclined to the mystic view of life and is well-known as the Editor of *The Sufi Quarterly*.

H. P. Blavatsky examined at length the aims and actions of the Jesuit order in her first book *Isis Unveiled*, and also penned an able indictment in her *Lucifer* for June 1888 to which the attention of all readers is called. We will give but one remark:—

All those who are pursuing in life's great wilderness of vain evanescent pleasures and empty conventionalities *an ideal worth living for*, are offered the choice between the two now once more rising powers—the Alpha and the Omega at the two opposite ends of the realm of giddy, idle existence.—THEOSOPHY and JESUITISM.

This whole article is worth a careful study by everyone interested in the spiritual regeneration of the human race.—EDS.]

What opinion can enlightened persons form, in this century, of the Jesuits? In the past, they have filled widely various rôles in the mental conception of their observers. As thieves—breaking in, where moth and rust doth not corrupt, to steal the soul—they have long been the chief bogey of the Protestant cupboard. To followers of the Pope who could appreciate their elevation above the levels of mediocrity, they have been the vanguard of the Church Militant. No one, in any camp, denies their prowess as missionaries; they have proved beyond question their right to the title of the greatest missionaries of any creed the world has seen. But the modern agnostic will perhaps sneer at these messengers of Christ, by whom the first metal cannons were cast, for use in China, in the seventeenth century. Are they, for us, a relic of bygone superstitions, or still a moral force to reckon with in the evolution of mankind? To answer the question, we must examine the psychological values of Jesuitry, and decide what exactly it stands for in the press of history and among the shifting changes of ideas. No more propitious moment could be chosen than now. Three new books, all of them *best sellers*—two of them dealing specifi-

cally with Jesuitry and one containing shrewd remarks on it in passing—lie on our table to bring the whole matter very vividly to our notice. It is being discussed ardently by readers whom the mass of theological literature would never reach and outside whose province such questions generally lie.

The most important of these books is Professor Fülöp-Miller's *Power and Secret of the Jesuits*. With quite amazing impartiality the author traces the history of Jesuit thought and action; and though this impartiality is at times irritating, the brilliant clarity of the exposition has made its success. Fülöp-Miller, however, has come to a conclusion which even his non-committal attitude fails to conceal. He hints at it, in the beginning, with a quotation from Novalis:

Never before in the course of the world's history had such a Society appeared. The old Roman Senate itself did not lay schemes for world domination with greater certainty of success. Never had the carrying out of a greater idea been considered with greater understanding. For all time this Society will be an example to every society which feels an organic longing for infinite extension and eternal duration—but it will also be a witness to the fact that unregarded Time alone brings to naught the cleverest undertakings, and that the natural growth of the whole race inevitably suppresses the artificial growth of a part.

That quotation, set right after the title-page, would seem to imply that, for all his admiration of Jesuit grandeur, Fülöp-Miller sees in the Jesuit system something contrary to natural growth. He confirms this belief in another quotation in the last chapter, and nothing in his consequent summing-up and praise of Jesuit achievement can mitigate the force of the indictment. He introduces those who have forgotten it, to Dostoevsky's *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*, telling us that it "was more dangerous than all previous anti-Jesuit writings put together," and reminding us that, "while all other theological feuds were bound up with their own age and disappeared with it, Dostoevsky's indictment has, even in our days, lost none of its vital and compelling force". He says:—

The *Grand Inquisitor* is distinguished from all other polemical writings by its sublime impartiality. In the complete apotheosis of Catholicism, it would be difficult to find another work which describes the underlying idea of Jesuitism with such profound understanding as the arguments which Dostoevsky puts into the mouth of his Grand Inquisitor. His powerful, convincing and eloquent defence of the Catholic idea of world power is nowhere interrupted by a single word, a single objection. Christ, the other interlocutor in this unique dialogue, hears the Grand Inquisitor to the end in silence. No opposition, however learned and skilled in controversy, could have annihilated the arguments of the Grand Inquisitor with such force as this majestic silence of the Saviour, which puts to flight all arguments founded on reason. . . .

The great Russian novelist did not believe that true Christianity consists in lightening the task of man on earth. Anyone who deprives man of his responsibility, robs him of his one possibility of appearing before the face of God; to "purge him of sin" with all the aids of dialectic is, therefore, to rob him of true salvation, of his eternal destiny.

Not all the incalculable services of the Jesuits to astronomy, physics, geography, or ethnography can blind our eyes to this indirect result of Jesuit teaching—that it hampers the effort of individual men and women to attain the realisation of God, weakening their will for such realisation. The free exercise of muscles, with a maximum of fresh air, is as needful in the spiritual as in the physical domain.

It is interesting to see that Mr. Julian Duguid, in *Green Hell*, an astonishing new travel book, points the same moral. The same splendour strikes him: the same ultimate degradation. It was inevitable that, in the virgin forest of South America, he should come in contact with the Jesuits. The story of their penetration in the sixteenth century into, and their rule of, until the second half of the eighteenth, a part of the world almost uninhabitable by man, is a romance in itself: an undying testimony to the power of strength and will inspired by faith. The South American forests are as remote from civilisation as it is possible to be, as poisonously unhealthy, as dangerous to every impulse towards moral regeneration as can be conceived. Yet Jesuit missionaries visited them, lived in them, and with cheerful ungrudging toil and a display of psychological acumen that is unbelievable won over their wild inhabitants to a life of real civilisation with something of culture and something of ease.

But in creating these Utopian settlements in the jungle, the Jesuits were unconsciously building up a practical example of the dangers of their system. The fathers were destined to be expelled from their place of vantage. The Indian peoples whose weakness they had so long aided, were to fall back into a last state infinitely worse than the first. They had been encouraged to lean too long on their ready helpers—and not to help themselves. The prop gone, for lack of exercise all trace of the little moral stamina they had originally possessed, was lost. The result has been a ghastly descent into corruption and despair. Here is the summing up of Mr. Julian Duguid:—

In the days of the Jesuits San Juan was a prosperous settlement several thousands strong, but now a bare four dozen spiritless people moving furtively about like maggots in a corpse. It is a pitiful sight, a living example of the danger and impertinence of tampering with the religion of a country. As missionaries the Jesuits were superb, probably the most powerful and enlightened that ever lived, but they were not prophets, and their expulsion left the Indians in the case of the man who drove out a devil without filling his place.

I wish with all my heart that some prominent member of the Mission World could have been with us on our trip. He would have read in Senor René-Moreno's work the courage and resource and amazing self-denial of the Jesuits; he would have seen with his own eyes the utter death in life to which their departure subjected the Indians of Chiquitos. For there, as nowhere else in the world, is the whole grim comedy played out. A few bronze bells and a mumbled mixture of Christianity and savagery, both imperfectly understood, and a ghastly lethargy a thousand times more destructive to the soul than the worst form of barbarism—that is the result of conversion.

There is a third book to be considered—the view of the Jesuit himself. Dr. Boyd Barrett's *Ex-Jesuit* is an *apologia pro vita sua*. He became convinced late in life that his work as a Jesuit was not ultimately *Ad Majorem Gloriam Dei*, and left the fold. His intimate revelations show a Jesuit in the making and are therefore a clue to Jesuitry in action—a clue to the solution of our problem, how best to estimate Jesuit practice in modern life. The irony of Dr. Barrett's last chapter will not escape even those who preach dependence as the road to God. For there is this tragedy exemplified in the book—that, having for so long and with such insistence urged the adoption of their highly crystallised system (valuable though it be to some) as a means to salvation, the Jesuits, in perfect good faith, rigidly repress those individual yearnings towards God-realisation that are the healthiest sign of the times. Their success, in this respect, would spell disaster to Religion and check the spiritual evolution of the race. Their responsibility is great for a certain bitter passage from Dr. Barrett that is only too frequently echoed elsewhere:—

If to-day there be religious folk who are fine and noble in their ways, it is at the expense of discarding some of the bulwarks of their religion. We Catholics have to forget the teaching of our Popes that "one is not bound to keep faith with a heretic" in order that we may conduct ourselves as gentlemen in a Protestant country. One may well wonder, seeing the colossal failure of organized religions, whether they are not part and parcel of effete civilisation. One may well desire that organization, should it be inescapable in religion, may in future time be communal rather than autocratic and centralized.

The dependence of weaker souls upon brilliant and devoted Jesuits, has led in the past to individual happiness and social progress. But the warning of Novalis comes back to us: "the natural growth of the whole race inevitably suppresses the artificial growth of a part". Dependence is not natural. Time has swept away the possibilities of Jesuit control—the spread of oriental mysticism on the one hand and scientific knowledge on the other have made it impossible for the Jesuits to regain the empire they have lost. Meanwhile, increasing social disorder proves the inability of modern spiritual muscles to cope with modern religious conditions. Can we exempt the Jesuits from responsibility for their part in keeping out of action spiritual forces which, though they steep the human soul sometimes in grievous conflicts, preserve it from the fearsome diseases of inertia and sloth?

One thing remains to be said, with regard to the future. The Jesuits have proved for all time the value of the precept *Be all things to all men*. Because of this attitude they won a foothold for their missions in the most unlikely places. When St. Francis Xavier visited the humblest of the slaves in sixteenth-century India, he would come in his simple dress and speak to them with gentle, homely words, sympathizing fully with their smallest troubles until he seemed to them soon like one of themselves. When an Indian householder entertained him, he always appeared to have the same interests as his host.

If the host was a merchant, he discussed eagerly with him the state of business and the possibilities of acquiring more wealth; in the usurer's home, he showed an astonishingly expert knowledge of all forms of credit undertakings, and knew how to perform the most complicated calculations of interest; on the other hand, if his host was a mariner, he conversed with him on nautical and astronomical questions, so that the host had immediate confidence in him. Officers, again, were astounded to find how much at home this simple priest was with military problems, and what professional questions he could put. Everyone listened to him with interest and attention, and he was invited again and again. Neither did he forget the members of the domestic staff: he praised

the maid who brought in the food, and, after the meal, asked to be allowed to speak to the cook and talked to her about cooking, and, when the servant showed him to the door at his departure, he questioned him sympathetically on his personal circumstances, aspirations and troubles.

Yet, within the velvet scabbard, was a two-edged sword. Behind every word and movement was an ulterior motive—the cause of St. Ignatius Loyala put first. What if the cause of the human heart were to be put first, without an

ulterior motive? What if a band of men, bred in the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, were, like the Jesuits, to be all things to all men, but for no other reason than the love of God—helping each, by means of his own religion or the dictates of his own heart, towards the realisation of God in self and so to the realisation of God in all mankind? Jesuitry thus transformed would surely mean the world transformed!

RONALD A. L. M. ARMSTRONG

The Great Pyramid of Ghizeh from the Aspect of Symbolism and Religion. By FRANCIS W. CHAPMAN. (Rider & Co., London. 6s. 6d.)

The Great Pyramid of Giza (or Ghizeh, according to whether you prefer the English or French transliteration) has been the subject of a vast number of enquiries, speculative and historical, and still arouses many remarkable theories concerning its designers and builders, its meaning in the past and its significance in the present. Once having described the distressing features connected with the building of the Great Pyramid—the toll in life, the cost in wealth, and the ruin wrought to the people—and having concentrated upon certain astronomical aspects of the orientation of this gigantic tomb, many writers on the great monument of Cheops have permitted their imaginations to roam, if not to run riot. The author refers to these writers and says:—

Inspired by the zeal, but restrained by the folly, of many imaginative works that have been written of recent ages concerning the Great Pyramid, I add my own contribution.

He has much to say that is helpful to those who seek everywhere to discover and express the good, the beautiful, and the true, and who find their best guide to knowledge in what has been handed down to us from the past. He would probably have done better, however, to have condensed his material somewhat. It would make two smaller books, one a summary of Pyramid lore, the other containing the large body of quotations he produces on "The Inner Self" and the

"Oneness of God and Man" culled from the whole realm of literature, from *The Book of the Dead* and the Greek Classics down through the medieval mystics to the modern transcendentalists and psychologists. It is all evidence of his tremendous breadth of thought and reading, but is not immediately connected with Pyramid symbolism.

The last two chapters purport to be the experiences of a man who, in modern times, went with a chief priest and candidate for initiation into the Great Pyramid, and relates in a Socratic dialogue the instructions of "Suphis" (Cheops) to the neophyte. These instructions seem to be an expression of the author's own philosophy.

The author has an original idea which calls for comment. He hopes and believes that one day the Great Pyramid will be restored to its former beauty as regards the casing, and suggests that within it might be written year by year the names of the men who have best served humanity, chosen after the manner of the Nobel distinctions. He tells us the work could be completed in six years at a cost of one thousandth part of the money now spent on world armaments. We can certainly think of worse ways of spending what might—and doubtless one day will—be saved to the world on armaments, but the unromantic aspect of the Sphinx to-day after the restorers have done their best (or worst) is a warning lest the same unhappy fate may await the rugged beauty of the Cheops monument.

G. W. W.

Clairvoyance and Thoughtography By T. FUKURAI (Rider & Co., London. 21s.)

The story of the urge of the author to do his duty by Truth is more significant and more telling than the contents of the volume proper. Modern Japan seems to have absorbed among other western vices the western scientific prejudice. The Preface narrates the shameful persecution of the author by his intellectual colleagues, even compelling him to resign his position as a professor at the University of Tokyo. That Dr. Fukurai is a careful and most conscientious psychical researcher seems not to have any influence on the "open-minded" gentlemen who pride themselves on their scientific and sundry

other attainments. We must record our appreciation of the Theosophic spirit shown in facing ridicule and loss of prestige and position for the sake of that which is regarded as Truth.

The volume makes somewhat dry reading as records of observed phenomena most generally are. The care taken in devising tests, in conducting circles, in recording observations is praiseworthy. There is a wealth of material in the volume, but the weakest chapter is the last which offers conclusions.

The Book is beautifully printed, and the illustrations well serve their purpose, but it loses considerably by the absence of a good Index.

O.

Some Religious Elements in English Literature (Hogarth Lectures, No. 14), By ROSE MACAULAY (The Hogarth Press, London. 3s. 6d.)

On the book jacket of this compact little volume—only 156 pages—we are told: "Miss Macaulay treats of the religious element in English literature in various periods from the eighth century to the present day." There is little more to be said, except to admire the enormous range of Miss Macaulay's reading. She started her book with a theory, but as she quaintly says, "mis-laid it on the way". The chapters of the book are, however, arranged on the basis of the theory which was that "most religious literature was the outcome of some clash or conflict, and bore stamped on it the nature of this conflict, and the fusion, victory, or defeat which had been its outcome". The book begins in a comparatively leisurely manner gathering impetus as it proceeds. The first two chapters bring us to the end of the Norman period in 64 pages; three pages are sufficient to dispose of the nineteenth century.

But the subject Miss Macaulay has essayed so valiantly is surely beyond the power of any human being to accomplish in so small a compass. The casual reader, whose acquaintance with English literature may not, probably will not, be profound, will gain very little from this volume. Miss Macaulay asks too much knowledge of her readers. But what else could she do? Some 160 authors listed in the Index (which is one of names only) come under her survey, however quickly and brilliantly they may be disposed of.

Miss Macaulay cannot of course completely eliminate in this book the little flashes that we have become accustomed to in her novels, nor would we wish it. Viewing the book as a whole, we feel with the author that she has but dipped into an enormous subject, and therefore we must excuse her too crowded canvas. But nevertheless it is bewildering, and at the end we are rather left wondering whether, despite the learning that shows itself throughout, we are much wiser than we were at the beginning, or have arrived at some definite haven.

T. L. C.

A New Model of the Universe. By P. D. OUSPENSKY (Kegan Paul, London. 25s.)

This is one of those books which are difficult to review for it is possible neither to thoroughly condemn nor to wholeheartedly praise. There are times when it baffles, bewilders and annoys; times when it interests and instructs. But on the whole it lacks a sense of balance and continuity. This arises probably from the fact that its various chapters have been written at different intervals and their subjects are not always connected. The most interesting chapters are the essentially personal; the most baffling those in which the sex problem and superman are discussed.

Mr. Ouspensky clings to the notion that through the centuries there has been handed down knowledge which has been preserved and treasured by a small group of people, and seeks to direct our attention to esoteric passages in the New Testament. With the theory of the secret tradition we do not quarrel but blame cannot be placed upon us if

we express our dissatisfaction with the attempt to explain what Mr. Ouspensky terms "Esotericism in the Gospels".

To quote extensively from the New Testament is easy but quotations neither reveal the hidden meaning of the quoted passages nor "the encyclopædic character" of Mr. Ouspensky's work for which his publishers make claim.

Yet while advancing these words of criticism it is only fair to add that his remarks about dreams, his explanation of Yoga and the description of his visits to the Pyramids are all worth while. Those, however, who are fresh to the study of occultism, theosophy and allied subjects will not find the author a helpful guide since his contribution will add to their bewilderment rather than enlightenment. On the other hand those who have given previous study to these subjects will find little that is new to them within its pages and will on the other hand be conversant with others' works, such as those by H. P. Blavatsky, which are easier to understand and more instructive to read.

W. A. PEACOCK

Tolkāppiyam, Vol. 1, with a short Commentary in English by P. S. SUBRAHMANYA Sastri, M.A., Ph. D. (Madras Oriental Series No. 3. Re. 1.)

Tolkāppiyam is the earliest extant grammar of the Tamil language. It consists of more than sixteen hundred *sūtras*, dealing not merely with the Phonology and the Morphology of the language, but passing beyond the province of strict grammar into a discussion of the subject matter of poetry. The volume under review is the first part of this work, treating of the enumeration, the classification and the *sandhi* of Tamil sounds.

The editor's plan is to transliterate scientifically each *sūtra* in Roman Characters—he might have given it in Tamil characters too—and to follow it with an elucidative commentary in English. The comment generally is a translation into English of the original *sūtra*, supplemented wherever necessary with

illustrative examples. The editor also points out where the old Tamil commentaries differ in the interpretation of the text. The original feature of his commentary is the occasional occurrence of valuable philological notes. (cf. *Sūtra* 91 under which there is a discussion of the nature of the cerebrals *ṭ* and *ṇ* in Tamil and Sanskrit.) One wishes that such notes were more frequent.

The Preface, though brief, is full of suggestive remarks on old Tamil Sounds. The editor's opinion that *k*, *c*, *ṭ*, *t*, and *p* were surds only in old Tamil may gain support from the fact that *Kumārila Bhaṭṭa* mentions *pāmp* (Mod. Tam. *pāmbu*=snake) as the Dravidian form in his day. Two useful indexes enhance the value of the work.

This scholarly edition of a grammatical classic will be welcomed, especially by non-Tamilian students of the Tamil language. We eagerly await the second and third volumes.

T. N. S.

With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet. By ALEXANDRA DAVID-NEEL. (The Bodley Head, London. With 29 Illustrations. 15s.)

Those who read Madame David-Neel's previous work, *My Journey to Lhasa* will remember that she there promised some account of Tibetan Buddhism. This book, and another which has yet to be translated from the French, *Initiations Lamasiques*, are a fulfillment of that promise. That the Author is qualified to write on her subject none will deny, for though Parisian born she is familiar with almost every Tibetan dialect and script and has in all spent some fourteen years in Tibet and neighbouring regions, and often in parts, so we are told, unknown to the average trader or traveller. As a practising Buddhist she obtained audience with the heads of monasteries throughout the land, and she was granted facilities rarely accorded a foreigner and perhaps never before granted to a western woman. Trained to approach all phenomena from the strictly scientific point of view, the Author's accounts of Tibetan rites and ceremonies, as also of the supernormal powers exhibited by many of the religious devotees, may be taken as accurate presentations of what she saw. The first part of the book is devoted to an account of her wandering in Tibet and of the country as seen from the religious point of view, while later Chapters, as their headings indicate, "Psychic Sports," "Mystic Theories and Spiritual Training," and "Psychic Phenomena in Tibet," are dedicated to a brief selection of the amazing practices to be seen in this land of mystery.

How long Tibet will retain its present dignified seclusion is a matter of international politics, but it is to be hoped that for many years to come there will remain one corner of the globe, and that perhaps the grandest of them all, where those in search of the things of the spirit may find an atmosphere, mental and physical, which is almost impossible of attainment in the money-making civilisation which is

sweeping as a noxious tide across the world. Forming as it does the mountain-girdled cradle of the Aryan race, one would expect unique conditions to obtain, and they are duly found. Extremes dwell side by side, the purest spirituality with the most degraded forms of bestial psychism, and the discriminating student will do well to keep the division clear in mind. The Author of this book gives examples of many of those supernormal practices which only the fool calls supernatural, ranging from necromancy to the highest forms of meditation, and adduces the finest of all proofs of the possibility of some of them, that she has learnt and practised them herself. And why should one be incredulous? One knows that Tibet is the home of those Elder Brothers of the race, by whatever name they may be known, and as every force attracts its opposite, so in the closest proximity will be found the greatest forces for good and evil known to the human mind. In such a land of mental paradox is it surprising that the inhabitants, and indeed the scenery and climate, should exhibit the same extremes?

In this volume many popular misconceptions are corrected and many uncertainties laid to rest. We are told of the true condition of the so called "Living Buddhas," of the respective positions held by the Dalai and Tashi Lamas, and of the difference between the "Red" and "Yellow" sects, while for general information about the country and its inhabitants the book is a worthy successor to Waddell's *Buddhism in Tibet* and the works of Sir Charles Bell. It has this difference, however, that Madame David-Neel is a practising Buddhist, one who studied for silent years in the monasteries until she has earned the right to speak with some authority on the subjects she describes. Where others speak as spectators, this writer knows, and the book is to be valued accordingly. A number of fine illustrations form an additional attraction to a book to be studied by every student of Theosophy.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

THE NEW WOMAN FACES LIFE

[Mlle. Dugard's contributions to our pages are always thought-provoking. Reviewing recent French publications she reveals the French aspect of the contemporary woman. In India the problem will arise in the near future—perhaps in the next generation. Our author's suggested remedy is practical. Theosophy would add that man's and woman's respective powers to build the home, as the bulwark of Society, should be evaluated.—EDS.]

Recently it was said that in the nineteenth century the position of women was at a very low ebb, but that to-day woman has very nearly regained her proper social and intellectual influence. We are inclined to believe this, not only because of the increasing number of women who succeed in professions hitherto considered as exclusively for men, but also because never before this, especially in the last few months, have writers displayed so much interest in feminine psychology, activities, and rights. We shall select for our consideration two from out of these many books that have appeared recently, which treat directly of the social problem, namely the change that has taken place in the position of women and the consequences thereof. These volumes are *The Promotion of Woman*. By L. Romier, and *The Emancipated Woman* (Contemporary Documents).

As author of *The New Man* (a work we have already noticed in one of our previous articles), M. Romier might well have entitled his last book "The New Woman". Since he did not do so, it is evident that he wished to emphasize the fact that the change which has taken place in the position of women is in the nature of an elevation to a superior dignity. But he is not unsophisticated enough, as was the Dupont of A. de Musset, to imagine that in our new world women can become "all that they wish to". He does not forget that in every being there are elements over which social evolution has no power, and the first part of his book deals precisely with these invariable tendencies connected with woman. But having recognized such elements as are static, he dwells on the transformation wrought

by material progress which "has freed woman by offering her chances other than domestic work, to earn her living." If it be objected that woman did not wait for this progress in order to acquire independence, he would answer that if one thing has been proved, it is the fact that until now feminine independence was precarious or illusory—"for a woman enjoys no real liberty as long as she depends for her subsistence upon the virtues or the vices, the aptitude or the ineptitude, the fortune or misfortune of another being."

Obviously the changes provoked by this new order of things are not without inconveniences. It is difficult, for instance, to know if to-day true wisdom consists in educating girls with a view to matrimony, or with a view to earning their own living. There are risks to be run in a family where the women are cultivated and able to provide for their own wants and are no longer prone to blindness or to passive resignation. One cannot overlook the discontent of the menfolk who have to submit to the trial of what may be called feminine clairvoyance!

It is useless to grieve over the inevitable.

The freedom obtained will remain freedom obtained, for women as for men. You cannot make young girls and young men return to the formal atmosphere of the past. You cannot make the children submit to the stern discipline to which their forbears were subjected. You cannot make woman close her eyes to life.

Besides, there is a compensating advantage for any difficulty that feminine independence may create. For woman it is dignity, security, and the free disposition of her heart. In married life the relations between husband and wife are more upright and more truly elevated

because "even if their association dispenses one of the two individuals from bringing material tribute to the resources of the family, the fact that both, if need be, can rely on their own work for their own wants, is enough to elevate their mutual attitude". For children the compensation lies in a more enlightened education. For society, "whereas to-day the intellectual culture of the man in the street is rapidly going down, while the culture of woman is rapidly ascending, the compensation is the guarantee of redress or the maintenance of intellectual values. For man himself, it is a means of progress. Having allowed women to come up to him, even to outstrip him, he will feel the necessity of improving himself in order to recover his prestige. So the 'promotion of woman' will elevate both men and women".

In reading these assertions, one finds it difficult not to be a trifle sceptical. Is it certain, for instance, that man *will* feel the necessity of improving himself, as M. Romier thinks? Is it certain that woman, when engaged in the struggle for livelihood, will show herself abler than man to save the cultural values from which he turns away because he has no leisure? Without dwelling, however, on these problems which would lead us very far, let us turn to *The Emancipated Woman*.

This book is composed of answers given by fifteen women to questions relating to the happiness, the feelings, and the moral judgments of emancipated women. (Of these fifteen, one is an Oriental, six are French, and the rest come from different European countries.) The conclusions to be drawn from their answers are of great value, for in their different ways all are remarkable women and devoted to the cause of their sisters. But they are far from being as optimistic as L. Romier. Many of them do not doubt that the emancipated woman (who must not be confounded with the *garçonne* or with the worldly-minded, free from morals as well as from work), the working woman "more conscious, more elevated, more just," will have greater chances of happiness. "To act

freely—which does not mean disregard of social laws—increases the possibility of realizing a dream or an ideal." Less sentimental than her elders, the girl of to-day does not wait passively for "a cottage and a heart". What she desires is to collaborate in the building of "a nest which can stand against sudden storms". It will be all the more stable, perhaps, because the girl of to-day, more rigid than her grandmother, does not approve a dual standard of morality, and wishes man to respect the precepts that he asks her to observe. So the family will be regenerated; society also will gain in the equality of the sexes as regards culture and rights.

In completing each other, the two partners will be able to give to social and political life its true development, having as an aim that peace and fraternity which woman alone can realize. We must not forget that women are the educators of the nation, and that it is the mothers who must not only inculcate from the cradle the spirit of peace and love, of individual and collective respect, but must also have the means to maintain this spirit in the organization of the state by means of legislative reforms.

But if some thinkers insist on the vision of the emancipated woman transforming family life and society into a Paradise, others are not blind to certain hindrances. The problem indeed is to reconcile the feelings of man, who is disconcerted and hurt by such changes, with the aspirations of women who defend their position the more passionately as they anticipate resistance. Thus arises a crisis, a difficult period to be passed over, which obliges us to postpone the dream of happiness to an indeterminate future.

There exists a frankly pessimistic minority, which thinks that neither now nor in the future is any good to be expected from women's emancipation. They say that "feminism is born of the brutality of man," and thus sprung from evil can bear but evil fruit. In the first place it favours masculine egotism. "You wanted to be free?" says the ever logical man. "Well, now you are; conquer your difficulties, and work as I do." This attitude leads to the neglect of the cultured woman; for a man so

thinking is afraid of feminine intelligence. What he wants is the "comfortably stupid" wife who relieves him from all domestic worries. When the emancipated woman succeeds in finding a husband, she exhausts herself in pursuing both professional and domestic duties, and "will never know the joys of maternity". But cannot such a woman know at least the pleasures of liberty, of equality, even of glory? Nonsense! "The only equality is the number of hours a woman works, and she always receives less recompense than man." Such women have obtained "all the liberties, which means often the liberty of dying from hunger, or living half-famished". And what does glory spell for a woman? "Glory means to return alone to an empty home where she warms herself by burning cuttings of the 'Argus'."* Besides, this new kind of life does not really answer to the true feminine nature. It makes for continuous work, "and woman is no more constituted for work than the greyhound is for ploughing". It is true it gives independence, but "in every woman there seems to be a natural craving for protection, perhaps for servitude. This desire is ignored, suppressed, but it persists." Her work takes her away from the home, and woman feels herself made for a quiet existence "in the shade of the geranium pot on the window sill". So women mourn for "the agreeable laziness of the home," for "the ancient bondage" which usually was not at all severe. It was indeed a "kind guardianship," under which woman, "consecrated to the loved duties of a home, protected against the rough world outside, could blossom in the atmosphere

of a spacious parlour, an immense kitchen and a garden wherein the children played". And for those minds which have a home-sickness for the past feminine emancipation is necessarily nothing but a set-back or a delusion.

Our own opinion is that the whole problem has not been faced as it should have been faced. The emancipation of woman has come to stay. It is the consequence of a millenary evolution, and it is useless to lament the fact. But even so, the emancipation of women is too new a development to permit praise of its results. The most useful thing to do at present, it would seem, would be so to establish conditions that a minimum of disadvantages and a maximum of advantages might be obtained. For this it would be necessary to study the means whereby the kind of work most appropriate for woman's nature should be reserved for her, instead of her entering, as at present, any of the professions according to circumstances, leaving some of the more peaceful careers to be invaded by men. It would also be necessary to see how such work could be regulated in order not to be an obstacle to marriage and maternity. Lastly, instead of asking if independence makes women happier than they were in the past, we should deal with the question from a spiritual point of view. If this were done, girls would be educated to feel that their happiness is less dependent on their emancipation than on their state of mind, and that the essential thing is not to be happy, but to do one's duty. Happiness, if it is to come, will come as a superaddition.

M. DUGARD

CORRESPONDENCE

ON THE WORD PATH

The etymological researches of Sir J. J. Modi in THE ARYAN PATH of July 1931 are instructive. The Sanskrit मार्ग (lit. the Path) is equally charged with ideas. The lives of Indian Saints are full of lessons, for all of them have trodden a path and have advised their followers to do likewise. The essential qualities for a devotee have been laid down in the order:—ध्या (attention) भक्ति (devotion) ध्यान (meditation) and योग (union).

But there is the definite stage in the evolution of the true devotee which must not be overlooked—the gaining of the guidance from a Master. The Lord Dakshina-moorthy under the shade of the Vata tree taught the four Sanaka Brothers. The Lord Atmanatha acted as the Guru to Manickarasagar, the Tamil Saint, under the Kurunda tree.

The great lesson from these lives is that the Path cannot be traversed by the uninitiated i.e. without a guru. These *Karana Gurus* (Gurus who are the Cause) are met with if there is ध्या, भक्ति and ध्यान. One of the methods employed by such Gurus is the use they make of the dream-state of true devotees. Sri Thyagavaja Swami, the great devotee of Rawa progressed with the help of many dreams. Nor is the lesson of a living Samgasin-Cuddappa Sachhidanand Swami—without instruction. He had *upasana* (concentrated devotion) for a particular goddess for an unbroken period of twelve years with the result that Her Form appeared to him very frequently in dreams and guided him in the Path.

The Great Path is that of righteousness; and steps in that Path have been indicated in many ways by seers of India. The stages from *Karma-Yogin* (one who performs his allotted duty) *Mānasa-Yogin*, (one who attains Concentration), *Siddha*, (one who has

attained ordinary *Siddhis*) *Yogeeswara*, (expert in Yogas) *Rishi*, (Sage whose wealth (धन) is तपस् (Penance) to Maharshi (Great Sage) are sufficiently illustrative. Spiritual alchemy is the process which takes a devotee from one stage to another.

Nor is it without significance that *Yoga* practices can never be performed for long periods without the physical body attaining to immunity from diseases and abnormalities due to concentrated practices. This is called in *Siddha Sastras* कायशुद्धि: (Purification of the Body). The quest after ब्रह्मगर्भ in Tamil—(a function of which is connoted by alchemy) has thus actuated the anxious and life-long activity of numerous Hindus. There are three *Muppus* (lit. chemical product of three salts):—*Vaidyamuppu* (that used for medicinal purposes), *Vada-muppu* (that used for purifying all articles) and *Yoga-muppu*, (that used for *Yoga* practices). What these three constituents are, how and when these can combine to form the Elixir of Life—are subjects extensively sung by Tamil *Siddhas*. These great truths are couched in *Pari-Basha* (lit. veiled language).

To me the first step *par excellence* is the quest after a true *Guru*. Not without unparalleled sacrifices as in the symbol of *Kannappa Nawar* can the *Guru* be found. He having plucked the left eye out of the socket to offer to the Lord Siva was ready to sacrifice the right also: one leg was stretched in offering towards the Siva Linga and then the Lord of Ascetics revealed himself to the devotee.

The steps in the Path have been manifested in a thousand ways in India. Throughout the whole day from morning to night have the incidents of a Hindu's life been so regulated as instruction and preparation for the Great Journey. Even in the Iron Age have true devotees lived amongst the many and shown the

* A newspaper agency which sends cuttings noticing one's work.

Path to the Aspirant. Time was when the true temple was the body and the sanctum sanctorum, the Heart; (vide कमलालयं) But later days came when temples in wood and stone had to be erected as symbols for the guidance of the many. The peninsula is studded with the memories of Avatars and Saints. Not many know why certain temples are particularly hallowed. Chidambaram is far-famed because Sage Thiruwala attained *Samadhi* there; Thirupathi or Seven Hills saw the *Samadhi* of Konkavar; Srirangam was preferred by Sage Jothi; Benares was the resort of Nandideva; and Rameswaram commemorates the *Samadhi* of Sage Patanjali. But let us not forget that there is no short cut to the goal.

Madras

K. R. R. Sastry

YOUTH IN THE WEST

[It is a truism that the religious moulding of the collegian of to-day means the fashioning of the public mind of to-morrow. Below we print two letters, one from U. S. A., the other from Germany, which also refers to other European countries. The former deals with a metaphysical phase, the latter with a political one. The one strikes the note of the quest of knowledge to better the religious life—not rooted in some creed, but in sure knowledge; the other hopes and dreams of a coming Brotherhood of Nations—rooted in culture. Both could and should gain real strength from the Theosophical philosophy which provides knowledge and the method of right action.—Eds.]

I.—SOPHOMORICAL THEOLOGY

The college years mean for most students an inevitable readjustment to life and its values. By reason of instinctive awakening to the larger social interests, and by virtue of greater mental power for forming and following comprehensive ideals, youth is the period *par excellence* of religious enthusiasms no less than for the choice of life-occupation, for the development of patriotism, and for the awakening of zeal for social reforms. At this age the whole nature is full of energy which creates boundless faith in the possibility of wonderful achievements. Idealism, in the strict psychological sense, that is, vital interest in distant and difficult, even Utopian,

humanitarian enterprises, is natural to the young man. He is impelled to an altruism which is also self-realization.

The individual becomes conscious of complex, established social interests which confront him with more or less strangeness and peremptoriness. His mental powers are alert. He labours to maintain his personality in relation to the life about him. He is not disposed to surrender his judgment or his will. He seeks relations in which he can realize himself in company with others, and do so with intellectual wholeness and self respect. He is likely to have many doubts and to challenge the whole system of ideas and practices of orthodox religion as well as of the social order, for he has begun to analyse and question for himself.

Certainly the American college student has enough provocation to take his religious bearings. Controversies unnumbered rage about his head; each parish church, every local synagogue, has its little problem of the Modernist and the orthodox. A few skeptics still annoy the Southern Baptists and inject sacrilegious thoughts into the minds of the trusting youth. The bespectacled scientist has emerged from his laboratory to argue whether a new conception of God is the scientist's concern, and Bishop Berkeley's conclusions still provide the idealists with dialectical pabulum. The search for the One, the Great Spirit, the Cosmic Mind—call it what you will—becomes more loudly urgent every hour.

And where does the college student stand? Is he unmoved and indifferent in the midst of the general unrest? In spite of public opinion and comment concerning the conduct of the American college youth, he does better and more serious scholastic work, on the average, and lives by a higher standard of moral conduct than the student of any preceding generation in the history of the country. And if public opinion says that the mass of university students have thrown away God, it is a false impression given by a few—the so-called intelligentsia—who make it their business to oppose everything that has been established,

and set up something new of their own creation. These few have received the notice of the press, while the unnumbered mass think quietly and alone to a more or less sane and logical conclusion.

One of the most amusing phases of modern undergraduate life is the prevalence of the groups of so-called intellectuals. Every campus has its several cliques meeting periodically to solve the serious problems of life. Each of these several groups is secure in the knowledge that its members are the local leaders of thought, usually of a religious or philosophical nature. This conviction arises from natural causes. There is always a great deal of mutual congratulation connected with the meeting of such kindred souls. Personality is stimulated and the stimulators are always regarded as brilliant fellows. Each member is very sure that his contribution to the discussion is quite worth while.

The chief problem confronting the majority of these intellectual groups is the mental development of their fellow-students. All agree that the majority of the remaining undergraduate body is possessed of a remarkably low intelligence quotient and should not be permitted to clutter the halls of learning, though how to weed them out is something of a problem. More vociferous than most of their fellows, such groups naturally draw popular attention, and when they attack the religious prejudices and predilections of the time, the whole of the undergraduate body, in the rôle of innocent bystander, is marked by the thoughts and acts of a few.

If we relegate the intelligentsia to their proper place in the general picture, we shall find a wide range of religious outlook in any representative group of thoughtful college students. The rather blatant Fundamentalist, who keeps firmly closed the corner of his mind where he keeps his religious views, and clings unshaken to his belief that there is no Judaism but orthodox Judaism, no Christianity but Catholicism or Methodism or whatever "ism" holds his individual allegiance, is as rare in our nonsectarian colleges as the equally belligerent atheist,

who travels about with his pockets loaded with Ingersoll's speeches—in the little blue-book series—and who will quote, at the slightest excuse and with utmost enthusiasm, excerpts from "Heavenly Discourse". A half-baked notion of evolution, something from Voltaire, a little from Paine, constitute the militant atheist's stock in trade. He is prepared to stand up with Sinclair Lewis in any pulpit and dare God to strike him dead.

Between these two extremes are the majority, a host of floating, restless spirits who no longer can naïvely say that they believe in God, nor can quite readily disavow Him. Their silence on religious matters often covers, not indifference, but an uneasy apprehension that talking things through may hasten the day when they will have to give up the comfortable finalities of the theology they have been taught and in which the faith of many is wavering, in spite of themselves.

Some, perhaps most, essay with more or less success the herculean task of reconciling the contradictions between the dogmas they have been brought up in and the facts they have learned; and are able, by a liberal interpretation of their creeds, to stay within the orthodox fold.

But the student who honestly faces the facts he learns and is inapt at this mental jugglery finds himself often unable to reconcile the knowledge he has gained with the dogmas he has been brought up to regard as infallible. Not infrequently the earnest youth who has kept his spiritual yearnings caged like a bird in a ready-made creed has to pass through a very bad time indeed when that creed collapses, until he finds his aspirations for higher things stronger than ever for their new freedom.

There is the outmoded Wildian, who is enchanted by litanies, the singing of masses of the true believers, the colourful ritual of the Catholic Church. Another one wanders from church to church, now warming to Unitarianism, now to Methodism, only to relapse once more into the same racking state of doubt in which he started. Many are admit-

tedly agnostic, frankly stating that, in the absence of evidence or any powerful inner urge to believe, they prefer to balance precariously upon the edge of the precipice, neither desiring to fall into the vague depths of total disbelief nor able to stand firmly on the rock of faith. Some, who have dabbled in philosophy, seek refuge in the intriguing terms, "spiritual pluralism" and "universals". In the minds of others, God becomes a plastic idea; a more or less formless mass into which the individual intelligence may read order, and out of which they may fashion something in which they can believe and from which they may gain spiritual comfort.

These divergent views, this feeling of unrest and doubt, enter the mind of the undergraduate after he has gotten just a smattering of literature, philosophy, and history. It is natural, and the reason which governs the process is just as self-apparent as the motive which drives the infant to question everything which comes to its notice; a healthy condition which exists in all growing minds.

The college student finds himself in possession of a great many scattered facts and impressions, and the urge is strong within him to find the pattern of the great mosaic into which he may fit these isolated bits and scraps of knowledge. The mystery and the greatness of the universe, as well as the wonder of cultural and spiritual development, weighs heavily upon his frail shoulders, and he is impatient to discover the laws of natural and of human development, and to establish for himself rules which will give him a true perspective on all things of the centuries that have passed.

The terrestrocentric theology in which he was brought up is obviously inadequate to the immensities of space in which modern science shows our earth but a whirling speck. He is groping rather blindly for a synthetic philosophy of life which will satisfy both mind and intuition, a reasonable working hypothesis in which whatever is true in religion will appear in its due relation to the proven facts of science; and which,

above all, will show the purpose of life and man's place in the cosmic scheme.

PERN E. HENNINGER

[PERN E. HENNINGER is an undergraduate in the George Washington University—Eds.]

II. YOUTH MOVEMENTS OF THE WEST

The essence of Youth is revolt—the revolt that comes of a vision of broadening life and the urge to self-expression. Each generation tramples on the ideals of its parents but only to set up ideals of its own. Hence such movements as the Boy Scouts will find no place in this letter for they belong within the framework of our civilisation and contribute to its preservation and increased efficiency; whereas the typical Youth Movements of to-day aim at the building of a new order.

The thunderings of Carlyle, Nietzsche, and Tolstoi had little effect upon the brutal pyramid of industrial civilisation, but a few middle-class German youths about 1900 thought that it would be possible to escape from it and build differently elsewhere. Thirsting for light and air, they wandered forth into the lovely countryside of Germany, seeking that natural beauty and that creative freedom which the towns denied them. All that was artificial and conventional they opposed with the freshness of youthful instinct, giving up nicotine, alcohol, fashionable restrictive clothing, and extravagance in food, and finding in the old folk songs and dances full expression of their joy in life. In an atmosphere of mammonised religion and hypocrisy, these young people were suspicious of Christianity and, invigorated by the breath of nature and the rhythm of their dancing and wandering, they proclaimed a joyous paganism.

The movement grew. It was becoming conscious of itself and assuming the proportions of a crusade when the war came: it crumbled and most of its members perished. With the revolution, aspirations of liberty reawakened and thousands joined the new, largely proletarian, Youth Movements with a bitter knowledge of the horror of our civilisa-

tion. The romantic ideals of pre-war Youth were no longer sufficient: political power was now the goal. Central Europe was seething with political dissensions and soon the Youth Movement was in like condition. But amid the diversity of faction and ideal two important creative impulses took practical shape in the establishment of Youth Shelters and Working Communities.

Many of the 4,000 Youth Homes scattered across Central Europe were originally dormitories for tired workers but are now model houses embodying the finest applications of science, centres of physical, mental, and social culture. Here the self-discipline of Youth attains its finest flower and is preparing a race of nobly developed men and women.

The Youth Homes, however, are essentially holiday and cultural establishments: for the means of subsistence the young people are still dependent on the industrial order. In the black despair of 1922-24, when civilisation seemed to have come to irretrievable ruin, when financiers, politicians, preachers and professors seemed like hairy apes chattering obscenities, and something new had to be created, young workers set up a number of small self-supporting communities. Soon most of these banded themselves together in the ambition to create "a great working community of a brighter, freer, spiritually rejuvenated Germany" of which each society was to be a microcosm.

To most young Germans the ideal state is Germany—Germany in a position of triumphant leadership of the world. This seems a natural concomitant of the courage, determination, and constructive energy, the very intensity of the idealism, with which they attack their immediate problems. Nowhere else in Western Europe do we find these qualities on so grand a scale: nowhere else has the necessity for the salving of civilisation presented itself to the young with such urgency. In Holland and Belgium, the Practical Idealists spend much time in discussing the New Life and show themselves more idealist than practical. In

England, the Kibbo Kift clothe themselves in Lincoln Green, evolve weird ceremonial, and pride themselves on a romantic remoteness from civilisation. The Order of Woodcraft Chivalry teaches the ideal citizenship of a backwoods community. The Guild of the Citizens of To-morrow organises delightful parties, excursions, and camps.

There are other Youth movements in the West but these are typical. Youthful activity is mostly run off in sport and amusement: thinking is largely individual or a matter of abstract and vague discussion. National or world problems are not vitally felt. The cleavage between the old generation and the new has never been so wide as at present: but Youth generally has not attained to the constructive vision of the German Youth Movement of even twenty years ago.

The most vital contribution of these Western movements to the new civilisation is the sense of internationalism: the International League of Youth started by the Danes and the Christian Youth Movement whose controlling genius is Marc Sanguier are imbued with a beautiful spirit of human sympathy and world fellowship. It is pleasant to attend international conferences and listen to fine speeches, to exchange stamps and visits with neighbouring countries; but the righteous fervour of Youth soon evaporates amid the material baits of our present civilisation and achieves little unless poured with conscious purpose and intensity into some constructive channel—as in Germany.

Everywhere, however, there is a dawning consciousness that the future of mankind lies in his own will. The stirring of this recognition is already having powerful effects in India, China, and Russia. The Youth Movements of Western Europe are dimly groping towards it; with their slower apprehension they may ultimately realise the significance of their power more completely. Then—what dazzling vistas of opportunity arise, what undreamt-of greatness becomes possible for man!

S. H. FOMISON

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"———ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."

HUDIBRAS.

What Mr. Gandhi means to the West is the dominant theme in a noteworthy symposium recently published in Dresden, Germany, "*Die Gandhi-Revolution*," and edited by Fritz Diettrich. The editorial foreword strikes the key-note:

Gandhi's way in all its breadth will not be applicable in Europe for a long time, because it demands moral preparation, religious contemplation—in short, a Europe that at present does not exist. But in all parts of Europe there are those who are making preparation, who act in the spirit of Gandhi and by their own spotless example advance the process of Europe's purification with endless faith and endless patience.

Dr. Horst Schieckel regards as Gandhi's great and unique achievement the removal of the element of force from a law, felt to be unjust, by voluntary submission to the penalties of disobedience.

Gandhi's chief significance seems to Dr. Oskar Ewald to lie in his unshakable faith that real goodness is a force and that there is no real force that does not spring from goodness.

Gandhi's doctrine of non-resistance, of non-violence, appears to Dr. Theodor Lessing on the contrary, as a blow aimed at the very foundations of separated life, since he sees all values and conditioned existence itself as having arisen out of the difficulties of life and especially the friction with which

Gandhi seeks to do away.

While Dr. Franz Kobler sees great differences between Satyagraha and the Occidental Peace Movement, he recognizes the deep inner connection between them and the tremendous spur that the latter, particularly the so-called "active pacifism," has received from the universality of Gandhi's teaching. "Through Gandhi for the first time non-violence has grown from an enthusiasm into a new faith."

Dr. Robert Braun maintains, that a synthesis between West and East is possible; he draws an imaginary picture of a possible European Gandhi who will adapt Gandhi's gospel to the particular conditions of Europe.

Dr. Martin Buber sees Gandhi, with his attempt to instil religion into politics, as having entered the ranks of those who seek to overcome the ever growing separation between politics and religion. "Politics may not be excepted from the hallowing of all things." It is precisely the task of the West—of rising above the material civilization which it is neither possible nor necessary for it to renounce, "of humanizing this concern with things, of hallowing this our world, which will bring the two [Orient and Occident] together, since it establishes

the bond between *men true to reality* on this side and on that."

It is a remarkable symposium. India has known the British and the American views about the influence of Gandhiji in the world re-construction. Roman Rolland gave us what may be regarded as the European international viewpoint on the subject. And now from Germany come characteristically thoughtful pronouncements. In the inter-racial renaissance now taking place a discussion of Gandhiji's theories of life and state are bound to lead thinkers everywhere to look for that spiritual knowledge of which India has been a custodian for many long centuries.

In the April *Philosophical Quarterly* the presidential address of Prof. Girindrashekar Bose delivered to the Psychological Section of the Philosophical Congress is published. It illustrates some of the contentions in our opening editorial. It is a highly interesting paper on "The Psychological Outlook in Hindu Philosophy," and we are happy at the remarks he makes in the beginning:

The present day psychology bears the same relation towards philosophy as the other sciences do. Hence in recent times persistent efforts are being made to separate psychology from philosophy and it is for these reasons that I consider the position of the Psychological Section in this Congress as something out of place. . . . [But] Indian philosophy when compared with western systems stands on a peculiar footing. In no western system of philosophy has the psychological material been so dominant. . . . A psychologist, therefore, is

more in his element in the domain of Indian philosophy than in the province of western thought.

This fundamental and marked difference is due to the fact that the ancient Indian philosopher was not speculative but practical, and dealt not with any far away problem of reality, but with that which is nearer to man than his breathing, nearer than hands and feet, as the intuitive Tennyson asserted. We are glad of this departure; the Indian Philosophical Congress has set an example which can be advantageously copied by the western philosophers and psychologists.

The essay proceeds to divide the teachings of the Upanishads in a manner which shows the stamp of western influence on the mind of Prof. Bose. He says:—

The passages in the Upanishads may be classified under three heads from the standpoint of the present-day rationalistic demand.

Under the first division will be included all those passages which are both understandable and acceptable as propositions worthy of reasonable consideration

Under the second division will come those passages which savour of mysticism and which are difficult to accept as reasonable statements. . . .

In the third group are included all those passages in which absolutely no sense can be made out.

The recorders of the Upanishads are described: "The *rishis* of old were unsophisticated people having an immense faith in their own experience and an unrivalled courage of conviction." But is this description correct? How is

it that these different unsophisticated individuals are so consistent in their intellectual outlook? How is it that each of them with an immense faith in his own experience utters identical truths and deduces identical propositions, philosophical and psychological? Why is there no clash of vision and opinion? And what is the source of their unrivalled courage of conviction? Each of them spoke as one having authority;—whence that power? That which is understood in the Upanishads is regarded on all hands as marvellous, as profound, as staggeringly amazing and deeply inspiring. And then because some teachings “savour of mysticism” and others “make no sense”—for whom?—these Seers and Sages are made to “sink to the level of childish thought and meaningless assertions”.

But there is a redeeming feature and we must do justice to Prof. Bose by quoting this remarkable pronouncement:—

There are many obscure points and dark lacunæ in the Indian philosophical system which have their origin in the remote past. Many passages in the Upanishads appear on superficial examination to be childish and even silly. It seems that at times the Upanishads rise up to giddy heights on the intellectual plane and then immediately afterwards sink to the level of childish thought and meaningless assertions. No serious attempt has been made to reconcile these incongruities. Scholars have generally passed over such apparently unintelligible portions in silence while detractors have made fun of them. Even if we assume the different origin

of these different levels of intellectual performance it is not clear why they have been put together and accepted as parts of the same whole by ancient scholars. If there has been any interpolation in the Upanishads it must date back to a remote past and it is curious that it should have escaped the vigilance of the lynx-eyed intellectual giants like Sankaracharya. Instead of considering the obscure passages in the Hindu Shastras as puerile and meaningless I am inclined to think that we have failed to realize their true significance. If we could place ourselves in the position of the ancient *rishis* and revive their mode of thinking, much of the obscurity of their utterances would disappear. The key to the solution of these riddles must have long been lost to us and commentators have either taken the meanings of passages which seem difficult to us to be self-evident and so familiar as not to require any interpretation, or found themselves in the same predicament as ourselves and simply shirked the difficulties of explanation.

Now, how does the learned professor (who shows in the above passage that he is not devoid of intuition) propose to revive the mode of thinking of the ancient *Rishis*? If the result is going to be attempts similar to the one described by him at the end of his paper in expounding the Swetaswatar Upanishad verse, he is bound to disappoint both the keenly analytical mind and the intuitive intellect. We agree with him that “a correct understanding of the Hindu philosophical systems will be invaluable to the intellectual and practical spheres of life,” but that correct understanding will not result as long as western methods and western philosophical and psychological propositions are used for the purpose.